

HE · WHO · WON · THE · WORLD

EDWARD · PAYSON · POWELL

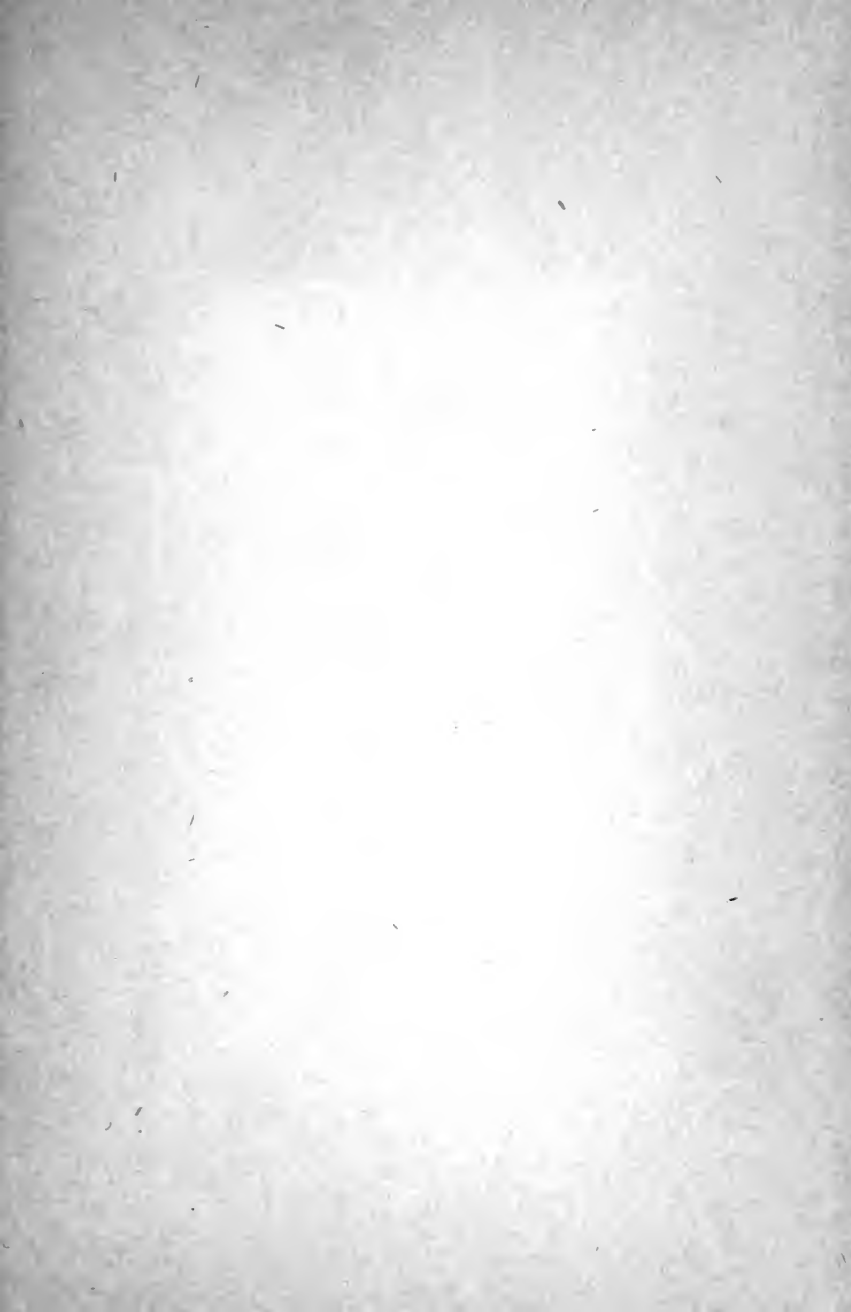


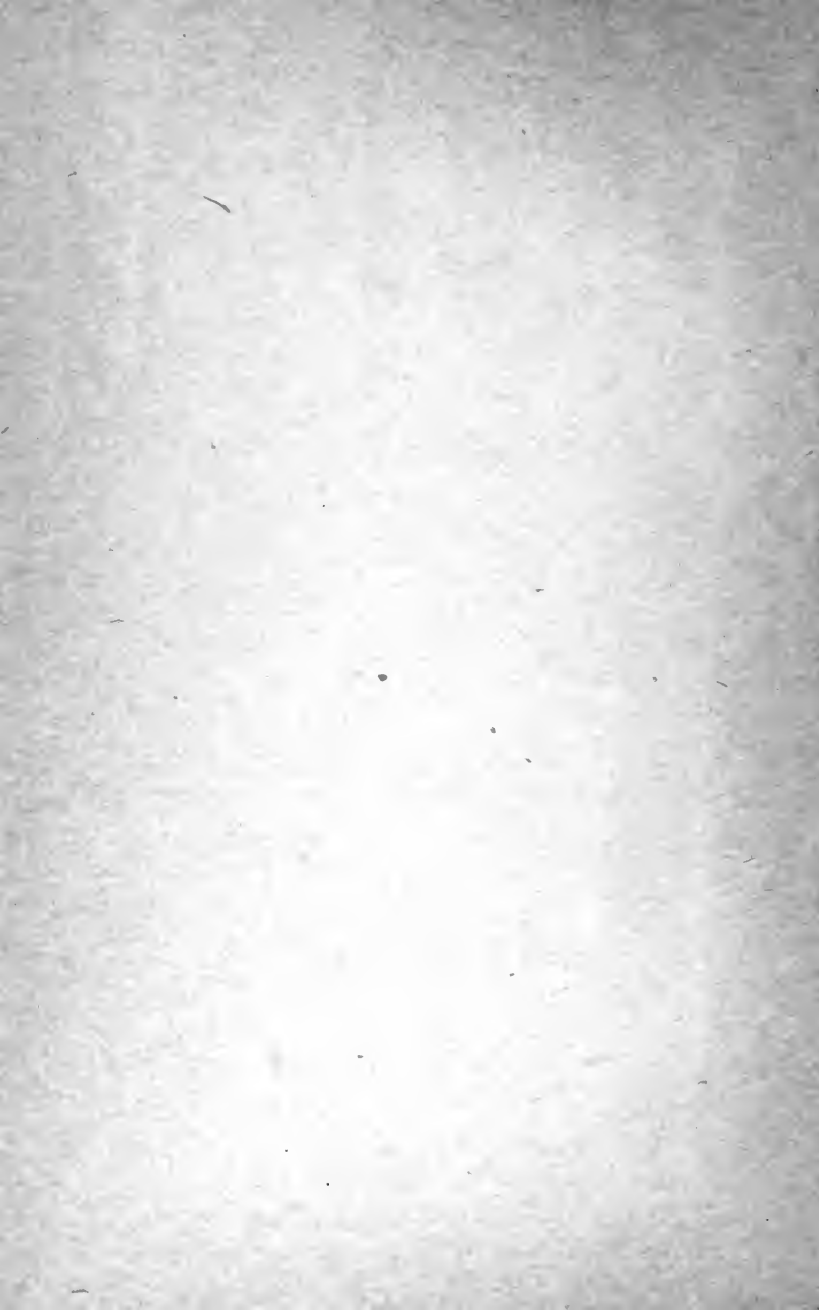
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HE WHO WON THE WORLD

A POEM OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CHRIST

BY

EDWARD PAYSON POWELL

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Make a Home in the Country," "The Country
Home," "Orchard and Fruit Garden," "History
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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED LOVINGLY
TO
JESUS
WHOSE MESSAGE WAS PEACE
WHOSE GOSPEL WAS LOVE

PREFACE

Dost thou know a song, more beautiful than any
other,

That men and angels, loving well, may sing to-
gether?

Let us gladly turn aside from meaner themes this
day

That we may sing this song of love that saves
always.

It is the song of Jesus, the most glorious God-son;
The brother, beautiful and good, who hath our
souls won;

Who unto us was born the power of hate to sever,
And bring the law of love to rule the world for-
ever.

THE ANNUNCIATION

DAUGHTER of Bethlehem! more fair than the
lilies that bloom
And weave their fair garments in gold without
labor of loom,
Thou shalt bear for the world a sweet blossom
of love, so divine
That the ages shall gratefully sing his rich
graces, and thine.
Yea, thou shalt be held as the Mother of God
when are dead
All the gods save him whose life for the dying is
shed.

But he by dying shall live, and in the sweet
lives of men
Shall rise from the darkness of death to life
eternal again,
For over the gates of Heaven is written in
letters of gold
“Let him that forever would live, the feeble
with love uphold;
And he that never would die, let him his life
give each day,
Denying the seeking of self and the thoughts
that destroy away.”

MARY TO ELIZABETH

Now must we mothers save this our fair world,
Endowing fruit of ours with power from God.
Cousin, once more the angel presence stood
Before me on the threshold as I went forth
To greet my Joseph; and he shone me through
E'en as the morning sun shines through yon
wood

When all the rays are level and the light
Fills full the shady slopes. His lips moved
mute,

As I have seen the lips of Joseph's shadow
Thrown on the hillside. For voice, mine he
took;

And I was full of words that music made
Of joy — like harps in Hermon's Vale of
Springs,

That breathe delight while sainted Deborah
sings.

ELIZABETH TO MARY

Mary, 'tis well! I do not doubt your words,
But I have not beheld the Lord as thou!
My love is his alone — my lord! my spouse!
Beautiful his feet; more fair his brow;
Love sleeps between his arms, with Strength
and Truth —

I am most blessed that I may sleep with Love.

I oft have kissed where his sandals pressed
The doorstep and the yielding sand and flowers;
And tears went down to fill my kisses print
Lest they pass too soon. For him I live; my worth
To bear such men to beautify the earth.

MARY TO ELIZABETH

'Tis well! But love of God is greater love
Than that of men; for us it now becomes,
With chastened souls and free of ev'ry thought
That stains, to give the weary world its lords;
Yea! from our lives, our hearts, our wombs to yield
No fruit but love, and love to truth annealed.

WISE MEN SING

Where shall we find the star-lit soul? Who
knows?
Who says all nature feels not human woes,
Nor thrills with one wide joy o'er great souls
born?
All stars, all souls do but contain the One.
O'er ox-stall, trembling stands God's light! In
birth
I' the manger shines the Star of this fair earth.

MOTHERS' SONG

From wombs of mothers
Come the Messiahs;
From souls of mothers,
Prince or pariahs.

To us the world belongs;
From us it rose;
Nothing shall ever be
But through us flows.

ANGELS SING

He comes! The Christ has come! Now God
and man do meet!
The choirs of earth and heaven unite this day
to greet!
Glory to God in the highest! Glory, love, and
praise!
On earth be peace! To men, good will and
joyous days!

SHEPHERDS SING

Dost thou hear the music playing
What the skies and earth are saying?
Mystic measure ever floating,
Peace and pleasure now denoting;
Now the stronger chord of trust
In the coming of the Just

Blending all at last in love! —
Dost thou hear this from above?

Airy voices filling space;
Nowhere canst the music trace; —
Where thou thinkest now 'tis found,
Swift, eluding measured bound;
Filling, floating, sweetly blended;
By the fleecy clouds attended;
With the moonbeams gently sifted;
There the clouds and song are lifted.

'Gainst all mountains cedar-crowned
Breaketh soft the secret sound;
Over vales where rosebuds, oping,
Wake the bees to honeyed hoping;
Every home it soft caresseth;
Round all things forever presseth.—
Whence and whither no one knoweth;
Like a summer wind that bloweth.

Was there ever music sweeter,
Giving mortal joy completer?
Like a cradle song that wrappeth
Soft a blessèd babe that nappeth.
So around the sleeping world
At this midnight hour unfurled!
'Tis the song of Christus' birth,
Singing round the sleeping earth.

ELIZABETH TO MARY

Mary, hast seen our boys? Nature did err
In making two when both were better one.
Yet now the twain are one. Where Jesus is
There John is found; no others do they seek.
Their love's like that which women give — but
strong.

Jesus, unflinching, for the lame dog gave
His arms, and bore him from the pitiless crew
John cried, "For shame! For shame!" and
brave words threw

So hot that all the rogues did melt away,
Leaving our lads the victors of the day.
How equal are they in their sweetness, grace,
While purest manhood shines on either face!

JESUS TO THE RABBIS

I am no Rabbi, but a mere lad,
Unformed as yet, and ever glad
To sit at wise men's feet, hear speech
From lips shaped by high desire
Unto God's altars where the fire
Of hope does kindle and thence reach
To other souls, and there will breed
From soft, sweet word to kingly deed.
But I do feel a something stirs
My soul that cometh not, great sirs,

From this assemblage. Night and day
A Voice, lipless, doth speak ; and I turn
To see from whence, and why I burn
With joy and such sweet love alway ;
Then to the temple where men pray,
Still hoping Him to find, the Voice.
Ye men of vision who rejoice
In all right knowledge, tell me why
I see not whom is ever nigh?

THE RABBIS AND JESUS

Then did Gamaliel bend his ear,
And wonder at the sweet lad's tear ;
And Hillel placed his hand above
The boy's broad brow with soothing love
Until the pain did somewhat leave
The great eyes and the cheeks aglow,
And through the swollen veins did flow
The streams of life with less of grieve.
Then James, loving — whom all men said
Had one time seen great Yahwe — led
Blind Simeon near. And he with joy
Drew close between his knees the boy,
Until his white-veiled beard fell down
Around the curls of red and brown.
Then: " With mine eyes that see not men,"
He said, " I see the Lord again.
It is the same sweet vision lent

One night unto my vigil spent
 In prayer." But to the boy he said:
 "Know this, there is no holy shrine,
 No temple, like this soul of thine
 Wilt thou by God alone be led."

JESUS' BROTHER CALLS

JAMES

Here are the enthusiasts, enwrapt in clouds,
 inspired —

With dreaming have forgot their bellies.

Faugh! I'm tired

Of plotters who the world will never let alone

To go, as it has gone, to the devil; tossing a
 bone

Of prayer, mumbleby, jumbleby, to God in the
 sky,

Cheap as dirt, over and over, pardon to buy.

Ho, planners of all good! here now your bodies
 are,

But where your heads? In Yahwe's sacred
 temple far?

On Himla's heights? Or in the golden porch
 dost pray

Of some air temple whose foundations all men
lay
And yet will lay these thousand years, ere any
spar
Or arch shall climb to meet where gods and
angels are?

Look you, Jesus! Now your father has a house
to raise;
The timbers of live oak lie pinned these seven
days,
Waiting your shoulders to bear themselves with
equal grace
Beside your brothers, while we shove the beams
in place.

JESUS TO JAMES

Full well I know I must about my Father's
work!
And look ye, James, I have no will my load to
shirk.

JESUS TO JOHN

I feel a stirring that I do not understand—
A voice within, around, as some divine com-
mand.

10 He Who Won the World

At night I'm plucked at in my sleep, but when
 I wake
No one is nigh; and when I walk beside the lake
Alone, or in the garden, oft I turn to see
Who is it calleth, following ever after me.

JOHN TO JESUS

Dear Cousin! I have felt the same propelling
 Will.
It is the Past, the mighty Past, that now doth
 fill
Your soul and mine — yea, all men's lives who
 know it not
And yet obey. For who hath striving cast his
 lot?
Is not each one the Past, compelled to do or be
What drift of ancient heritage decree?

JESUS TO JOHN

My John, I cannot look toward the setting
 sun
And count the gliding years that through the
 hourglass run.
I ever turn my face to where new dawns ap-
 pear;
With knowledge growing, alway man to God
 draws near.
In yonder sky behold the rhyme of law obeyed!

No star e'er swerves its course, nor sun nor
moon hath strayed

One line from rectitude; so, think I, shall the
dawn

Sometime of men arise, that when it sets awest,
O'er earth the will of God shall every soul at-
test,

While to sweet arts of peace will all the world
be drawn.

Dear God! Sweet Love! I have no heart but
to obey.

Thy kingdom come! Thy will be done! alone
I pray.

My heart so frames it that in dreams my lips
move on,

And all my days this one sweet thrall is worked
upon.

Come thou through me dear age of human
brotherhood,

And thou most glorious reign of God's rich
Fatherhood!

Let us to Hillel, John. No longer I can bear
This plucking at my soul that would its gar-
ment tear

To get a wider look, free from the flesh and
dust.

I must be born again; take up diviner trust.

JOSIAH, GAMALIEL, HILLEL, AND JESUS

HILLEL

That is the son of Mary and of Joseph; note
 What grace! What boyish beauty! Each
 movement doth denote
 A body that obeys the soul! The Greeks in
 all their schools
 Have no such models chiselled by Apelles' rules.

GAMALIEL

Hillel, the brute age dieth; the soul doth take
 command;
 And love and loving truth shall reign in every
 land.

JOSIAH

I could die, yea, gladly give my very soul, I
 feel,
 Could I by death the wounds of sin forever heal.

GAMALIEL

He comes who doth enfold salvation in his
 love;
 And to the lowest stooping, lift all sin above.

HILLEL

How great the task! How full of God must be
 that soul!
 Else will he fail ere yet he touch for us the
 goal.

GAMALIEL

Yea, he and God must be one life, one law, one will;

The Son of God, the Son of Man, at-one-ment fill.

JESUS

Ye counselors divine, your flawless words I hear,
The great commission BEAR without or pride or fear.

GAMALIEL

And for that truth the world shall kill thee. O my son!

Yet by that death at last the world thou shalt have won.

JESUS

Now do I lay my hand in God's right hand and give

My soul to follow, be the end to die or live.

ANGELS SING

Out of the brute man arose;

What he may be, who knows?

Ever he has been star led;

His eyes now in his forehead.

God he hath named, and hath seen

The Eternal in the changing sheen.

He hath found out the Father;

What more can he do, or farther?

PARTING OF JESUS AND JOHN

JESUS

This, this, I feel: I know not all, I see but this
— I must.

Yea, will I servant of all servants be for God's
own trust,

Beneath them all to bend, to bear them gladly on
my heart;

The poor man's need my gospel be; to comfort
all my art.

So, John, I will not backward look; 'tis only
this I know —

That I must lead the way where all the weary
ones may go;

Leal ever to the truth and fearing not — yea,
scorning shame —

I will henceforth among all men forget but
Yahwe's name.

JOHN

And I, I, John, a voice will be, a cry, a word,
Calling i' wilderness, 'Prepare thou for thy
Lord.'

JESUS

Farewell, my own sweet John!

JOHN

O Jesus, fare thee well!
I could not leave thee in kingly palaces to dwell.

This dress I doff; take thou it, woven seamless,
whole;
Wear it till in thy lot thy work be woven whole.
Henceforth I will the skins of beasts wrap round
my thighs;
On locusts fare, and honey wild, when hunger
cries;
So will I clarify my soul thrice clear with prayer
In yonder wilderness, till God shall meet me
there.

JESUS

And I, ah, John! know not to grieve or to re-
joice,
For evermore I hear and must obey the Voice.
Not to ascetic life it calls; but where the street
Is crowded full of life, and pain and sin do meet,
There must I conquer sin until my hour draws
nigh;
And then, ah then, bereft of God perchance,
must die.
It is not I that speak; I know not what I speak.
My soul is strong in God, but all my flesh is
weak!
O dear, my cousin! John! Embrace me once
again!
Close fold me to thy heart. Dear God! we be
but men
Weak! weak!

VOICE

Thou art my son!

JESUS

Yea, Lord, thy Son to be,
I to myself must die, and live henceforth to
Thee.

Once more farewell, my brother, half my soul!

But stay!

I cannot spare thee yet, yet more must not
delay!

Now go! And when my strength has come,
baptized of fire,

Thee will I seek, and Jordan's holy wave re-
quire.

And yet I cannot turn — this path alone to
tread!

O Father, grant that we may walk together, led
As one, that both may stand where one alone
would slip.

Grant that this cup of lonely toil pass from
my lip.

JOHN

I tear myself away, my Jesus! one more kiss!
Nor longer must our duty wrestle love's fond
bliss.

JESUS

'Tis done! He goes! Can angel form be fair
as thine,
My John? By this sad parting evermore be
mine.

JESUS ALONE

JESUS

Now must I know myself — am tossed about —
Of work and power and will am left in doubt.
I will awhile in some deserted place
Forget this body, seek God's helping grace;
With chastened soul meet full the tempter's
power
And gird myself to meet my trial hour.

JESUS ON THE MOUNT

Seven hills there are that raise their barren
selves
Above the desert place where Jesus went;
Their sides are rugg'd with stones and ancient
kilns.
But one stands high above the clouds that rain;
There Jesus clomb, and from its top looked
down.

The sun, that paled upon the plain below,
Thrust out its rays to flame the upper hills,
And folded round the man, and touched the
 mist

That rolled in fire. His raiment white as snow!
His face shone back to meet the sun! Alone
He stood and prayed. God met him on the
 Mount.

THE TEMPTATION

“This earth,” the Tempter said, “is thine.
 Look thou abroad
Far as the eye that dwells within the soul can
 see;
Give but thyself to lust of power; let thy great
 soul
Deny its servitude to God!”

 “Nay! Nay!” he cried!
Then turning to the tempting fiend, he angry
 spoke:
“Get thee behind me, Satan.” Flashed upon
 his brow
The sun like crown of gold irradiant round and
 round.

He was the Christ at last — knew well himself.
To rest
And glorious end came all the strugglings of
his breast.

Some men there are who tell that when the sun
was gone
And starless night had curtained close about
the world,
Still shone a light as if a sun upon the Mount.
So from that day the artist paints Christ's brow
with rays,
And all who know the victory of that hour give
praise.

MOTHER OF MARTHA AND MARY

Come, children; the broth is on the board.
Where art thou? The kid grows cold. Our
hoard
Is none too great; to waste the smell
Were sin, could that your hunger quell.
Where are the elfs?

MARY

Mother, I did spy
Them crowd a stranger passing by
A strange fair face, like early dawn

When with gold it fills the valley lawn,
And all earth's fairest things leap out
To shape. So did the children shout,
And each sweet thing came quickly forth
To view this wondrous dawn, this youth.
But I did bid them come, and they
To all my summons answered nay.
His arms full, they did tide about ;
Fill love full ; strangle boyish shout ;
Did, clinging, strive to touch his sleeve ;
Nor one would ask his gracious leave.
Forgetting self, the bold grew meek ;
The rough more gentle ; lifted the weak ;
Helped the lame Thomas to his knee.
My eyes rained as I did see
This miracle. To myself there came
A sweet new life that like a flame
Eats up my older self. I pray,
Mother, thou'lt come, and then straightway
The kid thou wilt forget and first
To behold this One forever thirst.

MOTHER

Mary, thou'rt ever prone to forget
This earth from labor hath no let.
Martha I'll send, and she shall bring
These lads perforce to mine obeying.

JESUS TEACHES

The smell of spring 'gan lay in the dew of the
soft'ning lawn ;
Through the sods came up the red tulip to blush
with the blushing dawn.
The farmers, with hands full of seed, went sow-
ing the southern slopes,
And their souls were gladdening with sheaves
of unharvested hopes.
Up rose together the songs of lark and of men
to the skies ;
While the world did grief forget, and death,
and all miseries.

Then did the Teacher teach from the book that
is opened wide
Over the valleys sweet-smelling and over the
mountain side ;
And ever the lesson was one of faith in Him who
fills
The vales with His wheat and pulse, and covers
with barley the hills ;
Who cares for the evil as well as the good, and
let's run o'er
His bounty to feed the sparrow that sings from
door to door.

22 He Who Won the World

“Not Solomon,” he said, “in glory was arrayed

Like these lilies white that blush beneath the olive’s shade,

Or like the grass that blooms beside the camel’s track;

They labor not, nor spin, yet do they nothing lack.

If God so clothe the grass, which is to-day a field,

Much more His love supply for all your want will yield.

“Strive not, therefore, for things that in the use will fail,

But place your minds upon the right that shall prevail.

Vex not to-morrow for an emptying purse or bin,

But delay ye not to store your treasures heaven within.

Know this — the first great truth — the world is God’s, and ye

The children are of Him who fills infinity.

“For who among ye all, if his son shall ask for bread,

Will turn aside unheeding or toss a stone instead?

Much more believe that He, your Father in the
sky,
Will heed your faintest whispers and grant you
full supply.
But ware the empty soul; by fruit shall ye be
known —
Are grapes upon the thorns, or figs on thistles
grown? ”

JESUS CALLS DISCIPLES

John stood most tall and beautiful. His face
Shone tenderest with love; each motion grace —
Unconscious selfhood bending to the weak,
Yet leaned himself upon the strong; was meek,
And most of all like Jesus — twinned were they;
In will most resolute, yet had no mood
To sway another's will save for his good.
O glorious fate, thus tuned for love or fray!
A flawless frame; a hand of manly might;
A heart to guide his hand to flawless right!

His brother James, of equal brawn, owned less
Of beauteous grace, showed less of tenderness,
Yet was a poet — saw all things afresh;
Cared least for traditions and the mesh
They weave of creeds; went straight to truths;
did spurn

Delay of generous deed from law to learn
The righteous plan. His liberty was law;
Law liberty. No one more quickly saw
A place for blows; yet first the twelve among
To curb his will, put bridle on his tongue.

To Andrew were confided those affairs
That linked the Twelve to carnal needs and
cares,

While Judas held in charge the narrow store
Collected to relieve the wayside poor.
These two were Jews, born merchants, and they
saw

The world as traders' see — to buy and sell
Without deceit did cover all their law;
Were thrifty, loving gold and silver well;
Waste they abhorred; were men of honest heart
Such as the temples lean upon, and mart.

Half like to John was Simon, Andrew half.
Among the Twelve he was the oaken staff
On whom all leaned. While John to Jesus
turned,

To Peter Jesus — building on his strength
Where all his future church should rest at
length.

You should have seen him as he, walking,
spurned

All hindrances; the pliant earth did dent
With foot to sturdy purpose firmly lent.
So with his tongue — ever he strode to front;
Quick to defy, defend, and bear the brunt.

But Thomas bore the restless mind and eye
That looked to left and right as to espy
The hidden. E'en his mouth stood shaped to
doubt;

His ear was quick to listen, while his tongue
Quick questioned, and his head slow wagged
among

Believers, while his brain oft put to rout
Great argument. Upon his broad full face
Oft Jesus, looking, smiled. Devoid of grace,
Alike devoid of dreams, he held it due
To honest faith to doubt what's hid from view.

It was a glorious sight, this chosen Twelve,
Sent forth to hew old faiths with stalwart helve;
Turn upside down the world's philosophies;
Change swords to peaceful plowshares; flight
the ease

Of lazy priests; set formality on fire;
Themselves inspired, all nations to inspire.
All men select — the very pith of those
Who, following out of Galilee, Christ chose
To be his seventy. Now shall we see
How each failed not in glorious loyalty.

JESUS CHARGES HIS DISCIPLES

The charge was this: "Go ye and preach my word;

Give to all men what, heeding, ye have heard.

Despise not one — nor rich nor poor; give ye

As it is given, without the hireling's fee.

I send you forth as sheep 'mong wolves; be meek;

Mine own throughout all lands I bid ye seek.

Fear not the threats of those who cannot kill

The soul. Fear God alone. Through good and ill

I will be with you. Who would save his life

Must give it, shunning not the honest strife."

WORLD VOICES

Sow seed on the waters; adown the stream

It shall bear thee a harvest far distant in years;

And there shalt thou garner, and many shall glean,

Beyond tide of thy cares and flood of thy tears.

Smiles in wheat-fields and vineyards and fruit,

On the banks of the future, the seed of to-day;

Fore-gathering harvests that ripen in age,

By faith shalt thou reap from years far away.

JESUS

To *live*, that is the problem; nor forsake
One thought that God has loaned thy soul to
 make
Its future self. I come your lives to save;
To make them broader, larger, stronger, brave;
To teach salvation from destroying sin;
From selfish purposes your souls to win.
Live ye in others' hopes; their wishes heed;
To lift the weaker; cheer the hapless need;
Befriend the lonely, and the sinner aid
To see more widely and his doom evade.
Hate none, nor scorn the meaner caste;
Know that with God the first may yet be last.
So, ever sending all your sympathies abroad,
Your life shall widen to the life of God.
Then shall ye be His children and shall say —
And feel the truth — 'Our Father,' when ye
 pray.

THE BEATITUDES

Now listen to the eightfold path that doth up-
 ward climb
To leave the sensual life and reach the life sub-
 lime,

28 *He Who Won the World*

For true the elder sages were who called the
way
Eightfold that leads the soul to everlasting
day.

Believe me that the first step upward is to know
That thou art poor in soul, and ignorant, for
so
Thou shalt despise not learning — being over-
wise —
For such as learn shall hold the kingdom of the
skies.

Next know that, wouldst thou still ascend the
height,
The second step is grief, but tarry not till night
With sad remorse — he mounteth best who swift-
est turns
From evil, hates the past, and new temptation
spurns.

Next they who, with the truth sincere, God's love
do seek,
Are teachable like children, ever patient, meek,
Thrice blessed shall be; for theirs is all the
earth contains
And erstwhile length of days to added truth
their gains.

This won, the next step like the former is — but
glad

The soul now leapeth — seeking all that may
be had

Of honor, virtue, wisdom, and God's righteousness.

Each step adds joy ; right onward will the soul
now press.

But he that, being filled, would on the eight-
fold way

Sit down discussing heaven, or turn aside to
pray,

The sinner's doom rehearse, his own elected
grace,

Forgetting love to many, still faileth in the race.

The sixth step is for those whose hearts are
purified,

To whom the world is fair and good ; and far
and wide

They see all things as God's sweet face, nor ill
can see,

As others all things vile, whatever they may be.

Now doth the eightfold path appear a grievous
toil !

Peace is the seventh step — forgetting strifes'
turmoil,

The clash of creed contention, and the baneful
pride
That often friend from friend and kirk from
kirk divide.

The last, sublimest step is this — no more re-
mains:
Bear thou the scoffer's sneer; endure for truth
the pains;
Fear not the sword; unflinching stand for
right; —
Though thou shouldst die, thou still hast won
the fight.

HIS DISCIPLES ASK A PRAYER

DISCIPLES

Master, wilt thou not teach us how to pray?
John's followers bend the knee three times a
day;
And thou dost know the Pharisee and priest
Seven times twixt suns bow rev'rent to the east,
Nor hold they him to be a man of God
Who lays not oft his forehead to the sod.
Teach us that prayer that most shall pardon
win,
And spoken swiftest, free the soul from sin.

JESUS

Prayers cannot save; words have no cleansing
power

Though thou shouldst tell them skyward every
hour.

They most do pray who most their sins eschew,
Nor hope by forms their lives to hide from view.
Thou canst not batter down the law 'gainst
wrong

By crying, 'Lord! Good Lord!' however long.
Ware those who stand within the temple's fane
And make loud prayer in hope high heaven to
gain.

When to the Father thou wouldst speak — yea
must,

Thy spirit burdened — go with childlike trust;
Dare not with role of words to din the street;
Within the soul's closed chambers learn to meet
Him who in darkness sees, in silence heeds,
Above the priest's proud prayers, the harlot's
needs.

THE PRAYER

Our Father who dost dwell in all the heaven
above,

Rule us, Thy creatures frail, by all-controlling
love;

Thy name we hallow, whatsoever each may call,
When upward-looking, cries he to the Lord of
All.

Thy will be done through all the bounds of life
and light,

As every star obeys Thee in the realms of night.
Give us, Kind Parent, day by day our needed
bread,

But more to see Thyself that thus our souls be
fed.

Forgive our selfish greed, our unforgiveness,
Lord,

As we to tolerance turn and equal rights accord.
The trial of our faith adjust with tenderest care,
And save us when we fall within a tempter's
snare.

So pray; but know that he who scorns his
brother's cry

Nor notes the meanest call for human sympathy,
In vain will seek to win from God what he de-
nies

To man — unheard his grievous pleadings and
his sighs.

Now wouldst thou know the secret of success?
'Tis here:

'Tis faith in God, to tread His footsteps with-
out fear;

'Tis faith in that propelling mighty Will that
leads

Through all events, all times, all hapless, cheer-
less deeds.

All moments are the heartbeats of Eternal
Life;

All centuries, incompleated purposes at strife.

Believe with all thy might in God, His love, His
will;

That all things shall be right to those who
would fulfil

The right. Plant firm thy feet where duty
points the way;

And, upward-lookers, wait thou for the breaking
day.

When all the web is woven, all the figure
writ;

Then shalt thou know why patiently the weavers
sit.

ANGELS SING

Who hath an ear the song to hear,
Of morning stars around earth's sphere
Will learn no new refrain to guide
The golden orbs that ever glide.

JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES

Ye are the eye of the world, and the world shall
learn by thee

The love and the loving life of the Father Eter-
nal to see.

Seek the lost to save throughout all lands, and
the world that is wide;

Nor sect shalt thou know, nor for race nor for
kin shalt thou divide.

Ye are the light of the world. Teach the gospel
of love that is new;

And the gospel of hate and of force that is brute
ye shall eschew.

I bid ye as one to be, as I with the Father am
one;

And so by thy labor at last shall the world in
triumph be won.

Ye are the salt of the earth; and that which
else would die

Shall be lift by thy words from death to immor-
tality.

But if salt its savor shall lose, how worse than
death itself

Shall be the lot of the savior that fails to save
himself.

THE DISCIPLES ASK A VISION OF GOD

DISCIPLES

The Father show! Then will we be
Contented, Lord, to follow thee.
But now we've searched both earth and air,
Called long and loud with honest prayer,
Nor face have seen, nor voice replies
To ease the grievance of our cries.

More kind, the earth upon its breast
Like any mother giveth rest;
The sun bestows a radiant love;
The stars look kindness from above.
Now would we, Lord, the Father see
As plainly as yon tamrisk tree.

JESUS

Me, Philip, thou hast seen — hast walked
I' fields, of corn and lilies talked.
Believe me, I am in the Father
And He in me; seek thou no farther.
God is a spirit, and must be
So worshipped; not as stone or tree.

Since in these feet, these eyes, this hand,
I am not seen, does doubt then stand
That I am here? Dost fail to love?
Nay, John, my throbbing heart above,

Lies warm thy head; nor do I fear
That thou wilt question I am here.

JESUS TEACHES THE DISCIPLES

JESUS

All things are pure, thyself at first being pure;
So sin shall cease, death die, and peace bear
fruit.

All things take on the texture of the soul —
At last the whole is well or all is ill.
So all things are to Him, the Eternal Mind —
Who sees no parts but one great whole, him-
self —

All things as truth — no failures and no wrong.
Who one with God becomes, seeing good —
And good alone — none can his soul destroy;
But he whose vision sees the ill, the false,
The foul, the base, becomes himself the false.
Death works no miracle to break the power of
sin.

Here lieth safety. Who wills against the light
Is lost; he saved who holds the eternal right.

ANGELS SING

This world is but a single star.
And all the worlds united are.
One law of love doth ever run
From sun through each remotest sun.

JESUS TEACHES THE DISCIPLES

JESUS

To all that darkness love shall come the Light,
The truth shall dissipate their well-loved night;
Out come all sin; all wrong at large be writ
Upon the brow, the deeds, the will. I' the pit
Of his own conscience falls he who makes a lie.
The fire that the soul kindleth shall never die.
The moon looks down on Tophet! The bones
lie white,
Piled high in pitiless mounds that wolves af-
fright.
'Tis the Vale of Death where, tho' the tempest
rage —
Pour Heaven's great tears man's sorrows to
assuage —
Yet are the fires not quenched. Bones cling to
bones,
And fusing, confused, do lift themselves in cones.
So death doth live! This is the life of death,
The heaving of breasts wherein there is no
breath.
The worm dieth not from out this grievous Hell;
In eyeless sockets makes his monkish cell,
Or tunnels crumbling death in tortuous way,
While clay o'er clay doth hold eternal sway.
Such is the soul where burns a Tophet fire —
Forever dying, yet cannot expire.

JESUS MEETS THE SCRIBES

He and his Twelve amid the ripening wheat-
fields walked
Of a Sabbath morn, and of the red-lipped lilies
talked —
How, spinning not, they did so much of glory
gain,
Trusting in Him alone who sends the sun and
rain.
And all did pluck the bearded kernels as they
went,
Then, blowing chaff, were still upon his words
intent.
Their fast they broke, not heeding that they
broke the day
Till certain scribes came scowling down the hill-
side way.
These, as they met, cried out in wrath: “Hast
thou forgot
The law that Moses gave for rest; or carest
not?”

But Jesus turned himself about and said: “Not
law
Nor God’s great love do these men know, but
teeth and claw —
The husk that claims a tooth for tooth, an eye
for eye;

That saves the letter writ, but leaves the soul to
die;

Believes that God can tamper with eternal good;
Be satisfied with incense i' lack of rectitude.

Do thou the right, unfledged thine honor; truth
obey;

And know that God requires of us no idle day.

My father worketh hitherto all days in seven,

Nor gives the sun or stars a shortened route in
heaven."

Once more he turned and said: "Being lawyers,
know that law

Was writ ere Moses, praying, ten commandments
saw —

The one great law of Love that all laws doth em-
brace;

Eternal ere the worlds and heavens had found
their place,

Ere days were made, or years, or man, or great
or least,

That might be haggled o'er by prophet or by
priest.

All weeks are fronted as they go with hours of
rest

To give to six days' honest toil an added zest.

'Tis work, not idleness, that holds God's praise.

All days were made for man, not man was made
for days.

ANGELS SING

The Holy Writ, the Word of God,
Is printed in both soul and sod.

'Tis but the love of law men need
That they may all its statutes read.

NICODEMUS

Master of Truth, of God born, Love incarnate!
These are no crumbs fallen from tradition's
plate,

But bread of life that, in the dying soul
Eaten, doth wake new birth, making sad hearts
whole.

Here have I sat in judge's seat these many years,
Weighed law divine in scales 'gainst hopes and
fears;

Have heard from God no whisper; heeded books;
Judging for the Eternal by lawyer's crooks.

But now I know that thou dost learn thy law
Of Him who sees in righteousness a flaw.

Teach me the words of wisdom that I may
In truth be called Judea's Light alway.

JESUS

Hear, Nicodemus: God's first truth is this —
Thou canst not see the light, though plain it is
As yonder star that tips the western hill,

Nor hear His voice that all the world doth fill,
Till thou art born anew.

NICODEMUS

What sayest thou —
Can man a second time be born? and how?
Reënter whence he came his mother's womb,
And so reborn escape the gaping tomb?

JESUS

Most truly say I, subtle art will fail
To give thee wisdom, nor will aught avail
Until thyself art changed and from above
Of God born; loving truth, thyself art love.
Then shalt thou seeing, see, and hearing, hear;
And judge in holiness as God is near;
Thyself a mirror, giving forth His light
As in yon lake each star repeats this night.

NICODEMUS

I know not what thou sayest; can it be
That I am yet unborn? I came to thee
To give me law, but thou hast taken away
E'en that I brought, myself! Yet here I stay!
I would that I may have such power as thine,
And God with wisdom in my sayings shine.

JESUS

Would temple roof beseech the sun to illumine
Its rusty dome, and thus to shine assume?

Or, burnished fair, would need no prayer to win
The sun's great love to dwell its depths within?
Thyself aright, pure, free from selfishness,
God lives already in thy words to bless.

MESSENGERS COME FROM JOHN

MESSENGERS

We come from John, who sends thee cousin's greet
And prays ye soon, as in the old, may meet.
No whit of boyhood's love he doth abate
For one who in all sports he held as mate,
To whom in riper years of youth he gave
Each thought, each hope, each purpose, gay or
grave.

Now would he know if, having heard the call,
Thyself being tested — stood with God, faced
all —

Thou art the One hoped for, needed to mend
The world. Canst dare the fight unto the end —
Bow not to Moloch, riches, flesh, or power —
Until shall come in death thy conquering hour?
Canst gather all, unto the uttermost,
Their souls baptising with the Holy Ghost?

JESUS

Go now, tell John what ye have heard and seen:
From old-time hidden truth I lift the screen;

My gospel preach I to the poor, and free
 The wisdom that the schools hold privily.
 I came to save the sinner, not the saint;
 To rescue sufferers, whatso'er the taint.
 Tell John I heal the sick; the outcast lift;
 With love the veil 'twixt God and man have rift,
 To market bring the gems of human wit —
 Salvation, Rabbis hid in sacred writ,
 Upon the housetop speak I — nought have said
 In secret — God's sweet truth to children fed.
 So am I son of man, and in such wise
 Am son of Him, our Father in the skies.
 No other warrant bear I but the word,
 The love, the work, the truth that ye have heard.
 Tell John the love I gave to him of old
 I give to all the world, nor aught withhold.

JOHN IS MURDERED BY HEROD

JESUS

O my John, thou beautiful brother!
 In all the world I have none other
 Like thee. Thou wert one-half of me;
 I did, loving, so lean on thee —
 The front, the head, e'er running on
 To take the brunt from me, my John!
 Yea, thou so gentle wert withal,
 And yet so brave, without a call

The lambs, seeing thee, came to thee,
And the birds did leave the cherry tree
To perch upon thine arm. A dove,
I remember, in his sweet love
Did pluck for thee a date,
And gave, as to his mate;
Then softly with his beak
Did touch thy peach-like cheek
As doubting but thou wert some rare
Rich fruit — thou were to all so fair.
Now I alone must go; and none
Of all this crowd beneath the sun
Can hear the voice that we did hear: —
Nay! all shall hear and heed it ere
The Spirit dieth from the call
We only heard. God doeth all.

JESUS BY THE LAKE

Beautiful lake of Gennesaret! Gem of green
Galilee!
Villages six and hamlets many make round about
rim for thee.
Dreamily thy waves beat 'gainst orchards of
olives, making soft sound
Where wine presses color thy waves, so closely
the vineyards stand round.
Slow moving in lines, along the highway rolls the
grain-laden cart;

While cottagers fill hampers of figs that asses
bear off to the mart.

Down to thy waves, far reaching, the shadows
of mountains at night

Span over gold grain fields, and pastures green,
with sheep dotted white.

Doves fly over the house tops like clouds, or set-
tle to feed on thy sands,

While storks stand gravely and wise, not resent-
ing the touch of men's hands.

All the picture is peace, and poetry dwells round
the rim of thy sea,

Most beautiful lake of Gennesaret, gem of dear
Galilee.

Cool are the springs that leap from the hillsides
near loved Magdala

And smooth are the roads hewed in rocks where
men go down to Bethsaida.

Vines clamber the steepes of the hills and over the
trees of the vale —

Grapes cluster, dipping down to the waves, where
fishers fling out the glad sail.

Here came the Master of love, and his ways were
those of the valley green

That holds to its heart this beautiful sea, the
fairest the eye hath seen.

And around him men clustered, and women came
from far and from near,

And the children looked love for his love, and the
birds sailed close without fear.

He taught them the lessons God giveth to hearts
that are loving and pure;

That, heard well and heeded, to sadness of souls
will ever give cure.

And they loved this beautiful teacher so like
their own beautiful vale;

To whatever truth he sowed in their hearts
giving heed without fail.

JESUS TEACHES PARABLES

THE PRODIGAL SON

JESUS

A man did have two sons: the one a proud-souled
lad

Who never made his father either grieved or
glad,

All duty did with ready will, and turned again
As oxen in yon field obey the voice of men.

No riot in his blood did break upon the sea

Or ripple his unvarying will's monotony.

The father oft would praise the goodness of the
lad;

They worked together, sharing whatsoe'er they
had.

Not such the younger son, in whom a warmer
vein ;

Hot blood leaped up to fire the tinder of his
brain.

In him the father saw himself, and face to face,
Regretful, did his youthful passions oft retrace.
At last this boy would try the world. "The
goods," he said,

"That will be mine, give now — then I'll with
Fortune wed."

His father gave. And wandering aimless, he
soon spent

His portion, living riotous. With short lament
He to a swineherd hired himself, the swine to
feed.

Nigh starved, he shared their meals and ate the
pods with greed.

Sad was his state ; and stripped at last of all dis-
guise,

He saw himself as he had seemed in others' eyes.
"Ingrate !" he cried. "I'll rise and to my
father go ;

Confess my utter baseness, and reveal my woe.
Perchance I'll win from his dear love forgiving
grace,

And he will grant to me a menial's place."

Across the hills he flew, o'er which he once did
roam,

Until he saw the spot beloved by him as home.

His father, whose sore heart had never known
sweet rest

Since first his boy had left the safe parental nest,
All watchful, day by day, afar his son did see
And ran to meet the prodigal most rapturously.
Upon his dear loved neck he flung his weary
arms,

And weeping loud, he held him refuged from all
harms.

He bade the servants take him to his boyhood's
bed ;

“ Kill quick the fatted calf that he be therewith
fed ;

Wash him, and clothe with softest raiment of the
press ”—

But still the lad held close with kiss and fond
caress.

“ It is not meet,” the boy replied, “ that I should
be

Again a son ! But as a servant look on me !

Thy substance I did waste ; thy love I did abuse.”

“ Put on the robe of welcome and on his feet put
shoes.

Spread, spread the feast !” the father cried.

“ With me have joy ;

For he I mourned as dead is once again my boy.”

The elder son went homeward from his daily
task,

And hearing sounds of feasting and of joy, did
ask

The cause. And when they all replied, "He has
returned,

Thy brother! And thy father joyeth," envy
burned.

He sore complained that he had never been made
glad

With feasting or with costly shoes and raiment
clad,

Though ever faithful. But he who had wasted
half

Their living, turning, had the ring and fatted
calf.

His father said, "All that is mine is thine, my
son.

'Tis true thou hast been faithful, left nought
undone;

But now my soul's delight denies its daily bound
Since this thy brother, whom I mourned as lost,
is found."

.

This was the story as he told it to the crowd;
And some approved his words, and some con-
demned, aloud.

The scribes said well that Jesus taught, with
something more,

New laws, unlike the eye for eye of legal lore —
Yea, a new God, the Lord of Love, who'd
 choose for His own

The sinners, not the saints. One flung an angry
 stone,

Crying, " Shall then the publicans and harlots
 rise

To higher seats than ours — repenting in such
 wise? "

" Yea! " answered Christus, " In God's king-
 dom they shall be

Foremost who, having sinned, do, turning from
 sin, flee.

So shall the harlots, grieving, enter ere the
 priest

Who, little erring, also knows of love the least."

THE SOWER

All the hillsides are ribbed with the farmer's
 furrows, mellow and brown;

And the ravens caw, ever awaiting the scatter-
 ing of seed falling down.

High over the valleys the vineyards stand, and
 the huge winepress, still.

The orchards of olives below grow green at the
 sun's sweet will.

Broad terraces round the hill brows wind up in
 successive zones

Where the scanty, rich soil is held 'gainst flood
tide by walls of stones.

Now all the wild rosebuds are touched with the
blood of spring,

While the sowers with songs, going over the
brown earth, swing

Their flail-like arms, and the seed that is sowed
before them flies.

Some on furrows that are softened falls, and
there with joy it lies,

Till the shouting lads and the patient, slow oxen
press down

The seed into earth's welcoming bosom, mellow
and brown.

But the tortuous paths are sacred as highways
ever to men —

Hard trodden, and strewn with stones from the
fields cast up again;

There the plough touches not, but there also
some seed doth lie,

And the birds from the blue come down and
glean with a joyous cry.

The Master and favored disciples walked at high
noon with love

Where the path did wind among the fields that
hung high above

The valley brown and over white Bethlehem's
walls arose.

And he saw in his mind the souls of men where
 the good God sows
And the seed of truth falls — some in the fur-
 rows turned by love
Till carefully the treading duties of life cover
 it warm above;
But some on the hardened tracks that are trod
 by wilful sin;`
And some on the souls that are shallow in love
 and faith within,
Giving seed but a day of life and a pledge that's
 unfulfilled,
Lacking the golden sheaves where the soil is
 deep and tilled.
Turned about, the Master told this tale of the
 sowers sowing seed;
And some said, "What is it?" But others with
 thinking eyes gave heed
To a larger hope and a harvest of gold in the
 nobler life
That is willed when the soul with the Sower of
 Good ends strife.

THE MAN AMONG THIEVES

A trader out of Jericho once went
With woven goods on peaceful traffic bent;
But thieves, that herded in a narrow pass,
Fell sore upon him, beat him, killed his ass,

And, taking goods, did leave the man for dead.
Another traveler whom business led
Came near and saw him bleeding i' the wood;
Leaped off his ass, and as best he could
Bound up his wounds, mounted him instead,
And gently to an inn his burden led,—
There cared as for a brother. When he went
He gave the keeper silver; and that spent,
If still the sick man, healing, needed more,
He would return betimes and pay the score.
His creed he knew not, nor his native tongue;
Enough his lot had cast him thieves among.
He was a human brother; asking nothing more,
He gave him brother's love and paid a neighbor's score.

JESUS IS QUESTIONED

Twelve Pharisees by chance beneath a spreading oak
Sat grouped at early noonday where their fast
they broke
With roasted pease; and much they talked of
Moses' law
And what tradition gave, and then bemoaned
each flaw
The people, having less of righteousness than
they,
Brake i' the edge of stricter godliness each day.

Keen grew their loved debate of primal sin and
all

The consequences of our earliest parents' fall,
Of righteousness by faith imputed, and the sin
Of those who used the Sabbath even life to win.
"Master," cried one, "if any fowl an egg shall
lay

Whilst caged for sacrifice upon a festal day,
Is't lawful that the egg be eaten?" "With
what oil

May one on Sabbath day illumine his measured
toil?"

Just then twelve Sadducees came proudly down
the path

Where farmers cut with joy the autumn after-
math,

And laughing loudly as they saw the Pharisees,
They cried, "Behold! Behold! What holy men
are these!

Half Moses o'er their broad phylacteries
stitched in,

They've less of need for love and law their souls
within.

'Book-searchers' they, who think the universe
to find

Inside their vellum rolls by the Eternal counter-
signed.

Behold!" they jeered, "what heavy shoulders
these men bear,—
Tipped over, not with brains nor common sense,
we'll swear,
But by the enormous weight of laws they sought
to bind
On us while they the vowel points of right
defined.
'Broomstick Pharisees,' with legs so piously
inlaced,
They've all the righteousness with which a fowl
is graced."
So chaffing scornfully, they girdles loosed, and
drew,
With basket store, a leather flagon into view.

But scarce had these quenched thirst when
through the bearding wheat
By camel path came Jesus and his Twelve, the
heat
To escape beneath the selfsame trees. Intent
were they
Upon the lesson which he taught them by the
way,
For he would have them single-eyed to truth, nor
turn
Aside from love and faith the legal husk to learn.
"Beware," he said, "the leaven of the Phar-
isees!

By fruit alone ye judge your fig and olive trees ;
So men. Whoso shall justice do, that man is
right,

And justified shall stand in Heaven's revealing
light.

Know this — it is the reign of good I come to
teach.

This is my mission. God shall yet all nations
reach.

All evil shall be overcome ; the world anew
Be made by love. 'Tis yet a mustard seed, it's
true,

But this believe, that I and my Father are as
one,

And ye must work with us till every land is
won.

Behold I to the poor preach broadcast — not by
stealth ;

But the rich despise not, nor envy thou their
hoarded wealth.

In God's sight are no chosen — the little ones
above

The great he places, and the weak he exalts with
love.

Beside the man the woman — equal partners
these."

Thus spake the Master as they came beneath the
trees.

SCRIBES QUESTION HIM

SCRIBES

Now would we, Master, thou shouldst plainly
solve
Some riddles of our law, our doubts dissolve.
Long have we waited one whose clearer sight
Might add authority to native light.
What is the law in one short sentence spelled
That one may learn, his arm at length outheld;
Or on one foot, well-balanced, say it o'er
And yet have time to say a precept more?

JESUS

'Tis here: Do thou to others as thou would
Have others do in turn. This holds all good.
No more remains of wisdom to be said;
Yet said, to action let thy words be wed.

QUESTIONED BY THE PHARISEES

PHARISEES

Say which command is greatest of the ten
That Moses gave to guide the lives of men?
Solve this, great Master! We will then resign,
Confess thy gospel and thyself divine.
Which is the first of all the great commands?
Which is the least? Which i' the middle stands?

JESUS

What rank is there to Nature's unborn laws?
If one be broken all the rest have flaws.
Wouldst thou be perfect thou must surely find
For every duty full accord of mind.
Who breaks the finest thread of truth and right,
Will break the cable if he have the might.
But here's all law; with all thy honest mind
Love God, and in thy neighbor ever find
Thyself; with all thy heart and mind and soul
Give love divine o'er all supreme control.

PHARISEES

Now wilt thou give our consciences reprieve
That oft in ignorance are left to grieve,—
How oft shall I a brother's sins forgive
And bid the breaker of God's laws, "Go, live"?

JESUS

"Seven times," one Rabbi; another, "Seventy,"
saith;
But Hillel, "While for repentance he hath
breath."
I say, forgive as thou wouldst be forgiven;
Thus shalt thou honor God and enter heaven.

PHARISEES

Still, Master, have our teachers disagreed
When from the marriage bond a man is freed.

For what offence be set aside a wife —
Name these, and end our Rabbis' wordy strife?

JESUS

Whoso unite, united are. They twain,
No longer twain, are one, and shall remain
One mind, one flesh ; in hope, in purpose one ;
Nor aught shall sever till their lives are done.

PHARISEES

Solve once again our trouble, Master, pray !
Can we, as honest Jews, to Cæsar pay
The yearly tribute, or shall we withhold
When servile publicans demand our gold?

JESUS

While ye from Cæsar hold not back his dues,
See that to God his tribute none refuse.
This penny bears the stamp of Cæsar's face ;
Your bodies bear the stamp of God's good grace.
The penny's Cæsar's ; ye are God's — pay then
Yourselves to Him, the silver unto men.

PHARISEES

If thou be Christ, then take of the stones we
tread,
By word divine ordain they shall be bread.
Then will we worship thee ; but if canst not,
These righteous stones shall drive thee from the
spot.

JESUS

Why should I to sate your gaping for the odd
Or get your idle seal that I am God,
Play pranks — turn useful stones to useless use;
Curing no one of lies, nor less'ning abuse?
I do not deal in Godhood as you do sell
Your manhood — if therefore ye stone me, well.

THE SADDUCEES AND JESUS

Again the Sadducees made quest: "A man
 being dead —
As Moses bid, a brother took his wife to wed;
In turn full seven did have the woman as a wife.
Now if there be, as some affirm, another life,
Wilt show whose wife she is, or will be, in that
 day
When, as they say, the dead arise from death's
 decay?"

"In this," the Master said, "from truth ye
 wander far,
For in the resurrection ye as angels are."

JESUS CALLS NATHANIEL**JESUS**

Under the fig tree when the dew,
Nathaniel, wet thy garments through,
And round thy knees the lilies white

Looked glad to see the morning light;
 Ere stirred the world of trading men,
 Devoid of guile I heard thee then,
 While softer than thy words there fell
 God's answers, all His love to tell.
 Then did thy face shine toward the sun,
 But of its radiance borrowed none.

Under the fig tree, Nathaniel,
 In prayer at noon I saw thee kneel —
 When the great leaves hung down for heat,
 And lizards basked on wall and seat —
 I heard thee then, and in my heart
 I called thee. Why dost thou start?
 Thou heardest my call, and lo, thine eyes
 Did look up startled to the skies.
 Yea, so it was I called thee then;
 'Follow thou me,' I call again.

Under the fig tree at close of day,
 When down the vale long shadows lay,
 I heard thee lift thy prayer sincere
 In accent softening with a tear;
 'My knees, Lord, chafe this kindly sod,
 Craving one word from thee, my God;
 I seek not wealth, nor Paradise,
 Nor that I may be overwise.
 Wilt speak one loving word to me,
 Or deign that I but look on thee? "

NATHANIEL

Thou, *thou*, art the Son of God!
Thou art the longed-for Israel's Lord!
Cleaveth to thee my soul with trust;
I will no more kneel i' the dust!
While God I sought through distant sky
He hath revealed Himself as nigh —
Yea, hath spoken, and hath made known
That in the heart of man is His throne;
Hath shown his love and faithfulness
And his ever readiness to bless.

WOMAN OF SAMARIA

MAID SOLUS

High noon sits on the valley. Down the dusty
way
The long line of camels moves toward the village
grey.
The ugly drivers beat their leathern sides with
staves,
Or cross the creature's flanks stretch out their
dirty calves.
I hate men! Trees I love! I would I might
always sit
Here, under loving branches where birds do sing
and flit,
By the old well, on moss; smell the wet air bub-
bling up;

And look about the valley ; sometimes fill the cup
Of a traveller, and skins for camels, oxen,
sheep ; —

And think until my soul like well grew cool and
deep.

There is no peace with men : they quarrel over
peace ;

Break heads about religion, love, and women ;
lease

Themselves to all clangor ; bowl down each
other's gods.

Let them eat now and fill themselves. I'll have
on these sods

An hour alone, only for the bees that sip and
sing,

Spending whole days in red ripe lilies rum-
maging.

JESUS

Maid, wilt lift that skin of water to my parched
lip

That I, now tired, may life renewed and sweet-
ened sip?

MAID

Good sir, I will. But whence so sudden camest
thou here,

Thus startling my sweet reverie to half-formed
fear?

Besides thou art a Jew and I Samaria's maid;
No Jew doth grant, or even take from us, love's
aid.

JESUS

'Tis true I am a Jew — but more the son of man;
I measure not my love by Pharisaic span.
The time shall come — yea, draweth nigh —
when neither here,
Nor in Jerusalem alone, shall men draw near
The God of Truth; but whoso, worshipping,
shall mind
The truth, they in spirit shall the Father find.
Know that of one blood God made all races of
mankind —
The Jew, the Greek — one only law of love to
bind.

AT THE POOL

ELIZUR

Here we are again. Legs, arms, bellies, and
backs,
All sore, broken, or twisted! And what one
lacks
Some other'll furnish. And when the angel
comes
Why one or two of the lucky will pick up the
plums.

Then the brigade'll march off for another year.
Crutch-music on the pavements awhile yet, no
fear!

This angel's a lout to leave us roasting what's
left

Of our bone-sacks, to save his wings an extra
cleft.

SIMEON

Elizur! you'll have your jest out o' the mouth
of death;

As for me, joking is scant for lack of breath.

ELIZUR

I swear by Herod there goes Levi, bed and all!
Hard waiting for the lazy angel's stirred his
gall.

He's off on sound legs! Cured by clear grit!

Up and try!

Damn angels that loiter while we lie here and
die!

My back's weaker than my will. I'm dead i' the
middle;

Both ends good! Who's to patch head to heels?

That's my riddle.

There are my heels, all right! Here's my head;
as heads go, sound!

But what's a head good for minus legs to
carry't round?

A fellow's all links! Break one, the whole is
spoiled. Crier, cry:
'Here is a heap of odd limbs at auction! The
lot who'll buy?'

SIMEON

'Heels and tongue' you should say, you bab-
bling fool!
Your back's given out carrying such a tool.

ELIZUR

An odd hundred, I say, of legs, heads, and
heels!
Misfits in generation — at birth wrong deals!
But a good patcher could patch, out of the
whole pile,
A score o' carcasses would be worth the while.

SIMEON

Hold thy shallow pate! Or I'll crack with this
crutch
A head that nothing'll cure of gabbling o'er-
much.
I'd more that some good soul in passing by
Would blow on me wi' wind o' sympathy.

ELIZUR

Ho, is it sympathy, Simeon? Why, there goes
a priest —

One, two, three of them! — home from their
latest feast!

Wiping their chins of the bits their bellies
wouldn't hold;

Not quite through grinning over the last lusty
story told.

See what Godly, pious dresses; and how their
faces fat

Fit their phylacteries, while each hugs his
prayer mat!

Such knees as those mustn't touch the plebeian
ground!

More need of angels to patch their souls, I'm
bound.

Their noses crook down, their eyes crook up!
Good Lord!

Good Devil! That's it! With what's going we
accord!

Get Heaven by all means — but get the earth
as well: —

That's business! At this rate what's to become
of Hell?

The rascals prate with their tongue to abuse
the Devil,

Every other organ — body and soul — given to
evil.

Oh, it's fine to preach justice, truth, and Eter-
nal Right;

Tell off their musty prayers to Everlasting
Might;
But with looking up and looking down they
never can
Sidewise sight to see the wants of a fellow man.
Hell will catch none at this rate. Lock it! I say,
But for us poor dogs who've sinned the Holy
Ghost away.

SIMEON

Elizur, you may chaff, but one day I did feel
A touch, a breath, a something that did through
me steal
As Life were passing near — a Presence which
did leave
Me thinking sweet of childhood and how then
doth weave
A mother's love about a babe, feeding it to
strength.
E'en thus, I think, if God should, pitying us at
length,
Draw near, His life would live in us; would fold
us in,
Bidding us live in His life, forgiving all our
sin.
I do since pray that this which did then barely
touch
May find me once again; then farewell to this
crutch.

JESUS

Why sitst thou here? Why in this knotted mass
of broken clay
Dost lie, and look so wistful toward the setting
day?

SIMEON

Aye! and why not? No friend have I when the
water boils
And the angel's power is in the stream to help
our toils.
So lie I here while others crowd before, and I
Have nothing else to do but wish and wish to
die.
And yet — this moment — I do feel a strange
delight
Around my heart, creeping like day upon long
night!
My limbs do stretch themselves! O God, my
cords untwist!
Old days are whispering in me, hope's boyish
tryst!
The warmth of life is rising in my blood, my
brain!
What is it beats on every sense? what joy of
pain?
For all these years two score of dead unbroken
woe,

Of pain unleavened, were as nought to this sharp
flow

Through veins of quickening life. Once more I
dare to hope.

Ambition wakes. New thoughts break loose
with pain to cope.

JESUS

Thy sins forgiven are. Arise, take up thy bed
And go thy way; by God's sweet love hence-
forth be led.

Thy faith hath saved thee, Simeon, while this
fleshly crew

Know not it is the soul that must the flesh re-
new.

SIMEON

Nay, 'tis thine own true soul that foldeth now,
unseen,

My feebleness. I felt thee passing yestere'en.
Thy presence did but barely breathe upon my
woe,

And who or what thou wert, my Christ, I could
not know.

But now I feel thou art God's son — Eternal
life —

To lift our bruised souls from wreck of carnal
strife.

ELIZUR

Simeon, I feel a strange stir of life
In these twisted bones of mine — a strife
With decay. Creeping through this dried flesh
There is quickening, and the shriveled mesh
Of muscles do round themselves and fill
With something soft like youth; a thrill
Leaps through me, to and fro, like shuttle
 thrown

By weaver! I cannot quite help groan;
Life tugs at every chord; all this bale
Of old ropes untwines. Up with the sail!
Simeon! See! Behold! I rise up! I stand!
I, that these forty years have clawed the sand.

Simeon! Ho! Hast thy crutch forgot?
I'll bring it! Here it is! What! will not!
Thou, too? Thy bones untwisting yield
To the soft power of faith? Annealed
Thy splintered spars which so did sway
Slovenly with thy flesh? Let us away.

THE HEALED SING

Sweet Teacher of life's better ways,
We'll pour the goblet of our days
Into hope's golden years. Thy love we'll sing,
And evermore to thee will reverence bring.

What else were dull and lustreless
To shining doth the sun caress;
So hath God shone upon our grievous woe
Till darkened souls with glorious love do glow.

WORKING AND HEALING

“Jesus of Nazareth passeth by!”
Such at noon was the joyous cry!
The children shouted, the old men run,
The mothers shaded their eyes from the sun.
Those who had broken themselves with sin —
The halt without and the halt within —
Hoping, yet doubting, ran to see
What this Nazareth prophet’s power might be.

Lepers afar stood up the street,
Fearing, but longing, the Lord to meet.
Aloud they cried, “Wilt thou but heal,
None shall vie with the leper’s zeal.”
Listened the blind as if to see
From his wonderful words what his face might
 be;
And the deaf, intent on his lips, would hear
The soul of the sound that fled the ear.
The crowd pressed close on every side.
Out of the market poured a tide;
Out of the houses, great and least;

And jostled by beggar came the priest.

“Who did touch me?” Jesus said,

Turning about his golden head.

“Why should you ask, when pressed upon

By such a crowd,” said gentle John.

“It was I,” said a voice of tremulous fear.

“I thought could I press the Master near

And touch his robe — the uttermost hem —

’Twould the tide of my trouble quickly stem.

If I wronged the Master, I pray forgive;

I would not rob him, myself to live.”

But the Master replied, “Be of good cheer.

Thy faith hath saved thee; go without fear.”

ANGELS SING

As all world atoms do intwine

Their common purposes divine

So joys below make joy above —

The heavens respond to earthly love.

JESUS QUESTIONS THE DISCIPLES

JESUS

Whom say men I am?

None can know me;

Alone before me,

The way narrows to death.

Whom say men I am?
I turn to the crowd;
My soul is bowed.—
Narrows the way to death.

Whom say men I am?
I would make God known;
Man to God atone.—
All the way narrows to death.

Whom say men I am?
Some 'Elijah risen';
Some 'John from prison.'—
The way narrows to death.

Whom say men I am?
Thou art the Son of God!
All ye are sons of God!—
Death leadeth unto life.

Whom say men I am?
He that opens the door;
None shall close evermore.—
Death leadeth unto life.

Whom say men I am?
Whoso self would save
Let him loose sin's slave.—
Death opens into life.

MARY MAGDALENE

Aye, let me but bend and kiss
His feet, and I will weep
My soul out there, such bliss
It is to know this world
Is not all selfishness.

I, who have been cursed
And flung about by men,
Loved for their own vile sakes,
Do love in turn — giving all.

Let my hair, nature's veil,
To hide my woman's shame
Fall o'er my face here bent
Close to these unsandalled feet.

Nay, I will not go! Thyself
In all this world doth save;
My only hope is here.

Tears? aye! But I will wipe
Them thus, e'en with my hair.
I know not why sweet life,

And hope as fresh as dew
Touch now my soul! My sins
Afar grow! — shadow like;
And still recede! O Christ,

I love thy love, thy peace,
Thy calm, pure holiness!
The very air that folds

About thee chargèd is
With purity and strength.

JESUS

Flow on, thou fount of woe;
Pour tears without restraint
Till grief doth find relief,
And sweetness overflow
Thy soul, born new with love.
Daughter, although thy sins
Were scarlet, they shall be
As snow — thy soul as white!
Trust God; believe in me;
For as I am, so God,
In whom is life and love,
Who would not that a soul
Should die, but, turning, live.
Pardon for thy sins I give.

JESUS' DOCTRINES CAUSE DISPUTE

JESUS

Who shall conquer the world? Who bring
Order and peace from chaos? No king
With armies, none mighty with law,
Nor he who interpreteth without flaw.
Strong arm brings strife ever to strife,

Stirring death into mortal life.
He that would be king, let him first rule
Well his own spirit, learn to school
His powers, observe the inner law;
Then shall he judge another's flaw.
He that would be first, let him be least;
Then shall he know to be judge or priest.

THE CROWD: ONE

Aye, that is it, Simon. Conquer the world
By lying down instead of being hurled!
The rascal's foot put on your neck and pray
The dear Devil not to take his hoof away!
Art smitten on one cheek? Turn then the
other;
The striker call by the sweet word 'brother.'
Hast lost a coat? Then to the thief go toss
Another garment, thus to lighten loss.

ANOTHER

Have faith! Look at the lilies afield
Who toil not, spin not, nor tools need wield;
Live ever at their royal ease,
Yet have their fine phylacteries.
There's the new gospel we have heard:
God lives to feed the lazy herd!
Watches for pluckèd hairs that fall
From beggar's head, and counts them all!

JESUS CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE

JESUS

Priests, lawyers, scribes, plunderers all,
Turning God's house into butcher's stall!
Who now shall cleanse the temple; sweep
Defilement into one vile heap;
The torch apply, and thereon build
The love of all that God has willed?

ONE OF THE CROWD

So ho, Bar Abbas! A miracle
We did demand and here it is —
The crowd, subdued, moves sweetly off
Like whippèd dogs. Aye, we all,
Not used to fear, but somewhat rough,
Are sneaked away, lo here, lo there!
'Twas yester I did see him lash
The temple traffickers — a crowd!
And laughed to see them curse and run —
Sheep, cattle, fowls, and hypocrites.
See, here the stone I would have flung
I swear by Moses I'll let fly
At the first priest that passes by.
Bah! To feel that stout fists and arms,
Good jaws, and old style righteousness
Of sticks and stones is losing ground!
So this new law of peace comes in.
No law to be left but love! and love!

Moses is now as good as done for!
Forgive! Forgive! I say forgive
Your enemies! Love those who hate!
Gehenna's out at this damned rate.

ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

'Twas morn on the Mount of Olives where the
slope
Toward Jerusalem did glorious visions ope.
Behind, the Dead Sea and all that cheerless plain
Where Jordan threads its way with tortuous
gain.
All death was there; all life was here. Palms
threw
Deep shade abroad; doves 'mong the branches
flew;
And merchants, bearing food spread out on
trays,
Invited all to buy who passed those ways;
Gave nuts and parched wheat and skins of milk,
And spread soft cushions woven rich with silk.
Four ancient cedars crowned the topmost
knoll.
These knew old Salem in its primal role;
Had watched the change from huts to sculp-
tured gate;
And still with calm its future lot did wait.
A gentle slope there was of gardens green,

Of farms, and avenues of figs between,
That eastward led; and then Gethsemane,
Half way from Salem's toil to Bethany.
O'er every path vines arched their verdant
green,

Clomb trees and cottage walls till half unseen
For bounteous clusters. There shepherd with
his crook

Led gently down the way by Cedron's brook.
The sun, just risen from the eastern sea,
Shone down on Salem's hills most gloriously;
Now crimsoned day displaced the placid night,
Flashed temple towers with gold, and silver
white

The flat roofs gleamed. To traffic oped the gates
And throngs poured in with wine and oil and
dates,

While other throngs poured out on merchant
quest —

The laborer seeking wage where wine vats
pressed

The vintage, or where aftermath of grass
Was borne upon the back of camel and of ass.
The toilers song, to cheer his task, rang out
Through all the thickly wooded vale — the
shout

Of driver, and the merry laugh that noon
Would make forget with weariness full soon.

THE LAST SERMON

Upon the Mount sat Jesus, and he taught
All those who for his matchless wisdom sought.
This was the last time that the Lord would call
The folk from labor in the field and stall.
“How did his words within us burn!” they said
When they recalled how love with wisdom wed.
At his feet the Twelve; beyond, adown the slope,
A sea of eager faces lit with hope.
Long taught he as if loth to close; then o’er
The valley bent his look, and taught no more.
Still gazed he at the scene of latest toil —
The gardens, vale, and Cedron’s silver coil.
Beyond the temple glorious one might count
The glistening domes on fair Moriah’s Mount
Whence roar of distant life did beat the air.
Then Christ his silence broke, “O city fair!
Once more, Jerusalem, within thy gate
I pass — the last; then leave thee to thy fate.
How oft would I have gathered from the snare,
The wile that kills the soul, thy children fair;
But ye would not; and now the fatal hour
Draws nigh, and I must yield my power.”

JESUS CALLS FOR AN ASS

Then rising from his seat, like to a king
He spoke: “An ass from yonder village bring.
I will fulfill the prophet’s words, will give

To David's city one more chance to live.
And yet I say to you the time draweth nigh
When not one stone shall on another lie
Of all those walls where yonder temple stands,
The very glorious sum of all Judean lands."

JESUS IS HAILED KING

And they brought an ass and over him spread
Their garments; and mounting their king, they
 led

The way through the valley to Salem's hill,
While the crowd did all the highways fill.
To left James strode; Simon to right;
John, fearing for Jesus, liked not the sight.
Out of the houses and from every side,
Leaving their labors, folk swelled the tide.
Down from the hills came an aftermath,—
The people with joy, the priests with wrath.
And the men and maidens down did fling
Branches of trees with their blossoming—
Roses of crimson, plucked from the walls,
And cherry with petal white that falls.
And ever the growing multitude,
As if by a single will imbued,
Sang, "This is our glorious David's son —
King of the Jews; his reign begun."

JESUS REFUSES THE CROWN

But Jesus spake to them, " Be not deceived this day.

My kingdom of this world is not — of hate and fray.

I love my Father well; He, loving me, might send

From heaven legions twelve of angels to defend.

But whoso draweth sword, by sword in turn shall fall;

There is no lasting kingdom but on love must call.

Yourselves first rule, this knowing well — he is not king

Whose head the smith shall crown with gold, on anvil shaping.

So shall ye be God's sons and with Him rule always,

Nor shall the humblest perish in the fateful day."

Then did some turn aside who heard the newer law,

Saying, " Who now alas, shall stand without a flaw

At judgment seat? The foremost shall appear the last,

And last the first — the Tables Ten forever
past.”

But some were glad, for in their hearts they'd
read

The Golden Rule ere yet to words it had been
wed.

PRIESTS IN COUNCIL

CAIPHAS

Now must we, Yahwe's priests, swift counsel
take

Ere this small heresy, like the first flake

Of snow on Ararat, do multiply,

And over Israel the pall shall lie.

It spreads apace. The common folk are caught
By cunning mesh this silver tongue hath
wrought;

Love! Peace! Plenty! Toil not nor spin!

But share your purse, and trust to God your
bin.

Great Yahwe'll fill! His children shall not fail
Of bread and wine, or come to any ail;

Stones he will turn to bread! water to wine!

Make fishes jump by faith from out the brine!

Aye, aye! Only follow him; believe; obey!

Cast law, tradition, prophet all away!

Then down with temple! No more need of
priest!

The last shall first be; greatest turned to least!
Down go we all; the beggars will up come! —
Of this cursed blasphemy that is the sum.

HILLEL

His face is not such chiselling as those Greeks
Across the bay set up — with eyes and cheeks
And chin all measured by the inch and line;
But more than all their gods, his is divine.

His is a forehead broad, as it would say
'O'er the whole realm of nature here lies sway.'
His nostril to great speech doth open wide —
Not swift, but passionless and strong, the
tide —

Dividing cheeks of real flesh, warm with life,
Not marble like your quarry gods. He is Life.
Behind his eyes — 'tis there the mystery layeth!
A fount divine, deep-welled in rock of faith!
His lips are not word-full. His speech doth
reign

Where thought and love are tangled i' the
brain;

O'er all his words a great compassion flowing,
Compasseth and comforteth me scarce knowing.
His deeds so played the fountain in mine eye
That I did crave to touch his mantle passing by.

SIMON

Here's John, who so did mouth his brave intent,

And on the gapping crowd his courage spent;

But when this Jesus oped his lips, his own

Were shut as when a crab grips finger bone.

His oaths did die in his gullet downward,

Rumbling as the colic had him inward;—

Didst note! Ho, John! brave John! Art convert now;

Ready before this fine young God to bow?

JOHN

Though but a carpenter's son, thou canst not say

He did not bear himself Godlike in the fray.

Dost know a God, Simon, when dost chance to see?

Art sure of the Devil soon enough to flee?

Must hunt God ever in vellum, moth-eaten,

Frizzled by mumbling priest, and scribe-written?

May not Yahwe be i' the round world still,

So one may hear him speak his recent will?

Where else, where better, the Eternal meet

Than in fair Bethlehem's or in Salem's street?

Is He these years more dumb, or man's need less,

That God be not abroad to curse or bless?
Are there no wombs He may these days be borne
in,

No souls in our times He will deign to live in?
Then have the laws and temples been a curse,
Leading us backward — all; no better, but
worse.

Am I convert? I know not. I'm through
Trailing about with your much-preaching crew.
I'll to doing! 'Tis all is left. Let me but obey
What laws I find within mine own soul away.

SIMON

What think'st, Gamaliel? Can we longer bide
While blasphemy becomes resistless tide?

GAMALIEL

I like not, Simon, lifting of the sword.
Oft Yahwe cometh as the peaceful Word.
Aye! and the Word in all the world will sheathe
All swords at last, and men will learn to breathe
Sweet peace and love. I know the might of
God;

I would not from His hand we seize the rod.
He'll rule, ne'er fear; and with Him right;
the wrong
Shall not be final, though at times all strong.
So let us bide; and if this thing be ought

Of His, 'twill triumph; else, 'twill come to
naught.

Thou hast my mind. There are to fear much
more

Than this young zealot — yea, at temple's core.
At heart of our fair church lie ills that smell of
death.

I sicken not when some fresh breeze doth give
me breath.

SIMON

Gamaliel! Thou no whit better art than
he,

This Nazarene who paradeth heresy.

Thus blasphemy doth get the bits in teeth;

Trampeth good discipline its feet beneath;

Defies the law; the elders brings to scorn

Because our counsels are by treason torn.

JOSEPH

Hist! hist! Son of Belial! Darest pluck thus
At beard of the greyest, wisest, among us?

Learn wisdom ere thou showest thy small store
To all the world; speak wiser or no more.

SIMON

No more I will; but will I act this night.

Words I will sheathe; to silver trust the fight.

THE LAST SUPPER

JESUS

Let not your hearts be sad; believe
 In God! For me ye need not grieve.
 Believe in me; I will not leave
 You comfortless, but I will be
 Where ye are gathered — two or three.
 This fair sweet world which now ye see
 God's house is, where ye may abide
 One hour; but mansions rich and wide
 Remain. And those whose lives are tried
 And fail not at the final quest,
 Shall reach unto God's highest rest.

JESUS TO PETER

My Peter hath no weakness save
 That he will not be weak; too brave
 In speech, his hot words quickly burn;
 Is hard of hand, of visage stern.
 He likes not here, my breast upon,
 To see the drooping head of John;

 Says nought, but looks askance; denies
 The love he feels; to passion flies
 Lest one surmise a gentle strain,
 Yet let a dog but cry for pain —
 Off goes his coat; the cur to save
 He'll plunge at midnight in the wave.

Well named The Rock! My church I'll build
By such a corner rock upheld.
But, Petros, ere that day shall be
Thou wilt deny thou knowest me.
First must thou find how weak thou art
Ere thou canst take the builder's part.

PETER

Nay, Master! Though the world deny,
All men — yea, every one — shall fly;
Yet will I not. Firm will I stand,
Undaunted; wield in this right hand
The sword that will thyself defend
And every wrong to right amend.

JESUS

There is a strength thou knowest not,
My Peter. To learn it is thy lot.
They that the sword do draw, by sword
Shall fall; there is in one soft word
More strength to turn this world about
And put great evils unto rout.

PETER

Master, listen! Here do I swear
No cowardice shall ever bear
Me from thy side.

JESUS

Indeed a Rock
Thou art; but by the crow of cock

This rock shall shaken be — that heed!
Naught else can teach thee all thy need.

JESUS TO JOHN

So like to him, the John whom Herod slew!
We were as one — no diverse purpose knew.
Lay here thy head; 'twill ease the pain I feel;
The wound of love 'tis only love can heal.
Lean here upon my heart; let thy swift breath
Decide: Canst drink with me the draught of
death?

Draw closer still. Thy love doth gather round
The pain that Herod made — that lasting
wound.

Methinks that brow was made so fair, my John,
For God to write his Golden Law upon.

Now say, canst drink my cup? The hour is
nigh

That for the world's good hope the Christ must
die.

JESUS TO JUDAS

O my Judas, didst thou not love me then,
Thou, when we talked of this sad world and
men;

Did lay our plans whereby we might lift up
The sinful? Droppest gall into my cup?

Clean wert thou, O my Judas, as yon cloud!
No taint of vice had stained thee, ever proud —
Yea, proud! In that the secret of thy fall —
Proud of thy goodness; condemned us all;
Too proud to wait on God, to trust the end;
And to God's plans thine own frail wit would
 lend.

But know that all the threads that we have spun
 God knows,
And will together weave when He His shuttle
 throws.

IN THE GARDEN

• **JESUS**

Alone with Thee, my God!
I wet the dew-wet sod.
Not one is left! Wilt Thou
Touch now with love my brow?
O Father, in this dread hour
Take not from me Thy power.
Must I, Godless, alone,
Losing sense of help, atone? —
I, in my poor flesh, and more
In spirit bruised sore?
Show me Thy face again,
Ah God! once more. Just then!
In the hour! my hour! yea, mine.

I did forget! Not mine
 Until I stand alone
 And so do make atone.
 Whither shall I turn, for now
 Not God will help? My brow
 Is wet with dew. 'Tis blood!
 Welling from life's flood,
 It breaks its boundary
 To set my spirit free.

JESUS TO SLEEPING DISCIPLES

Wake! wake! my brothers, wake!
 Can ye not watch one hour
 While I with prayer must test
 My soul's extremest power?

Wake! wake! O brothers, wake!
 The time fast draweth nigh
 When I for self must live
 Or for the world shall die.

Now ye poor weary ones,
 Not knowing, sleep and sleep;
 But I, alas, alone
 Do weep, and pray, and weep.

God! friends! heaven! the world!
 All fail! Why kneel I here?
 It is the end of prayer —
 The end, glad end, of fear.

Sleep! sleep! ye weary ones!
My cross is all my own.
Sweet cross! dear lifting cross!
How dear this night thou'rt grown!

Sleep! sleep! my brothers, sleep!
Your cross ye soon must take;
Full soon the world will learn
To hate you for my sake.

Wake not; but take your rest!
Why vex you with my woe?
Beloved, the hour is here;
I pay the debt I owe.

Though morning sun find here
My tears upon the sod,
Yet they shall fillèd be
With light and hope from God.

ANGELS SING

Only love immortal is,
Leading mortal on to bliss!
Christus stoopeth now to win
All men's hearts from death and sin.
Thus he drains the immortal's cup;
They that hate shall lift him up.
In his death ye all shall live;
Life and love doth Christus give.

TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION

PILATE'S WIFE

Pilate, I pray have nought to do
With slaying Jesus; all night through
I've tossed in dreams that do alarm
Lest him thou bring to any harm.

PILATE SOLUS

Aye, aye, my sweet! The women dote
On this fair king. We'll have the vote
Of the rougher sort — the cursed crew
That hounds my court. I hate a Jew!
A dozen priests in a roaring crowd;
A dozen devils to mischief bowed!
By God! they have no mercy! Hark!
They set the rabble on to bark —
Aye, and to bite, were not good spears
At hand to quicken wholesome fears.
Now whet their slaving jaws to rend
This Jesus; I'm the law to lend
To cloak the damned deed! Let's see
If subtlety will set him free.
Here have I caged Bar-Abbas, thief,
Who pillaged synagogues — the chief
Of robber clans; 'tis him they dread
Above all men; would love him dead.

I'll put him in the balance. Choose
Twixt him and Jesus, noble Jews!

TO THE JEWS

Good friends, I have a whim to please;
Jesus or Bar Abbas will release.
Choose you! 'Tis mine this time to obey
Your choice! Him I'll release straightway.

THE JEWS

Give us Bar Abbas, wilt thou set one free!
A loyal Jew, to Yahwe true, let be;
Though he have taken moneys not his own,
His prayer and ours will for that sin atone.
Away with Jesus! Kill him! Crucify!
There is our choice! let all blasphemers die!

PILATE

But what of evil hath he done?
Our law demands the crime; no one
It slays unheard. Say who hath aught
To accuse? What evil hath he wrought?

THE CROWD

Thy word, Pilate, is given; thou canst not
deny.
Away with Jesus! away with Jesus! Let him die!

So we, the people, being made voters, vote
Bar Abbas loose! This our decision — note!
As for the other rogue we all say nay;
Give him a dose of Hebrew law we say.
Or here's a good two thousand Jews, each one
A stone in hand; we'll cast our votes; anon
The trouble's ended. Pilate, thou'rt no friend
Of Caesar — mark that well — if thou do lend
This fellow aid, the would-be King of Jews!
Bar Abbas! ho! Bar Abbas the people choose!

PILATE

I'll keep my word, accursed crew!
To that I'm bound e'en with a Jew;
But this man's blood with you now stands.
Ho! water bring! I wash mine hands
Of the foul stain! Let no one say
I slew the man; I but obey
Your custom. Let your scribes attest;
His blood with you and yours doth rest.

THE PEOPLE

On us! on us! and on our children be
The blame! On us the blood most willingly;
We'll ever bear it till the world's remotest end.
But speed the cross! lest thou to other counsel
bend.

JESUS GIVEN OVER TO BE CRUCIFIED

THE MOB

A king! Joab! a king! we coronate,
Wilt have a crown, king? Here're thorns for
thy pate.

Give him a sceptre! Strap his throne on his
back;

The King of the Jews must not for honors lack.

Blindfold the God! Now let him prophesy!

Who struck thee? was it Jochabed or I?

Buffet him! buffet him! Now hear him pray!

Come, little Godlet! what is't would he say?

'Eloi! Eloi!' He's calling Elias to come.

Quick, give him a sop of gall his pains to numb!

See that the nails are strong, and drive with a
will!

Seize on there, Paulus! hold him firm and still!

Come, here's your chance! Other rascals you
would save;

Now save yourself, Savior, from death and
grave.

ANOTHER

Well, now, he has some pluck! He'll never
wince

Nor whine; carries himself like a real prince!

Here is his coat, one piece; toss up! Who'll
wear

The robe of God? 'Twould be a shame to tear.
Now see his dainty flesh! Lay on a rod!

ANOTHER

By Yahwe! I like it not — too like a God
He bears our thrusts! I feel about my heart
A melting of my flesh! I'll take his part!
I'm growing like some woman! Nay, I'll leave;
I'll strike for him unless I flee! I grieve
That I did cry to crucify; that face
I'll never from this brain of mine erase.

ANOTHER

Let up, ye cowards! Have ye now no shame?
A convert? No! I bear an honest name;
But a Jew, and any honest Jew, can see
This man is half a God — half devils ye!
Wilt slay me too? Well, that is better yet
Than I had thought! Ho! Now, sweet Christ,
well met!
When in thy kingdom thou art come at last,
Remember me, forgetting much my past!
And so by one rare thought of tenderness
I blot my record. Men this deed will bless,
Forgetting all my wrong! O happy hour
That blends my fate with one of Christly power
To save! Aye, save! for I am saved. I hate
My former self. Myself anew create;

In this man's love and loving life newborn!
 I laugh your spears and all your taunts to
 scorn.

OTHERS

Well, well! here's company! That's fair!
 We'll swing them together i' the air.
 Gods lonesome grow, like men, if left too much
 alone.
 So, rascals, see thou'rt social on thy triple
 throne.

ANOTHER

The sport grows dull, old crone, and leaves a
 taste
 That's not o'ersweet. Serve Satan in hot haste!
 Then leisure take; repent a bit, and pray!
 By ones and twos the crowd has dropped away.
 I'm off! The devil take the deed now 't's done;
 On this night's wrack will never rise God's sun.

ON THE CROSS

JESUS

Pity me, O God! O world; this sad sore wound
 Of sin here in my heart! I on the cross bound
 Am no more I — but all this piteous crowd.
 With all men's woes and sins am I endowed —

To feel, to bear, endure, and still to hold
Fast on Thee, O my Father! Now wilt me en-
fold

Tenderly or I fail; and with me all these
Thou gavest me by love's pain to release?

Pity me! pity me! for how can I now sustain
In this sore heart such infinite of pain?
For this I toiled, endured; it is my hour.
O Father, let me not fail! Have I the power
To kill the self that in this flesh hideth
Lest it all hopes of victory o'errideth?
I turn, I travail — broken, dying, tossed;
At last, dear God, in Thee myself am lost.

WORLD VOICES

Now, now, is he king, and he shall rule by love
alone;

And man unto God by his glorious faith shall
he bring at one.

To him shall the nations come in the ages yet to
be;

And before him the might of hate and wrong
shall forever flee.

OTHER VOICES

The brute age dieth — let it die;
The love age meets us from the sky.

The struggle changes; henceforth be
To save — not slay — man's destiny;
To lift his neighbor — not tear down;
To help the weak; not wear a crown
Of lordship, but pluck from death
The wounded — give sweet breath
Of tender words to those who err;
To sore, sad hearts love's oil and myrrh.

MEN AND ANGELS

He has failed not! he has failed not! Thy son!
He has finished the work Thou gavest him to
do!

He has overcome self; the world he has won!
He will gloriously gather all men to his heart!

He shall live! he shall live! in the souls of men,
In all fears, in all pains; in all far-reaching
hopes;

All ages shall crown him, till time shall die,
The most glorious Christ, the Beautiful One!

They shall sing! they shall sing! his boundless
love

In the golden days when the Golden Rule
Shall all laws displace and the farseeing soul
Shall seek his own good i' the good of the
whole.

ACCUSATION AND DENIAL OF PETER

ONE OF THE MOB

Here we'll have our sport,
Hold a Marginal Court.

ANOTHER

This fellow is one of the fools
That followed him, ready tools
For sedition! Note his tongue
Bewrayeth he was among
The pestilent herd. Tweak
His nose that he shall speak.

PETER

Thou liest! I never saw
The victim of your law —
Traitor! robber! what not! —
Till I saw him on this spot!

ANOTHER

Aye, but I swear I've seen
This fellow but yestere'en
Trailing with the trait'rous crew.

PETER

Thou liest! I am a Jew!
Thou a publican spy,
Sold to all infamy!

PETER'S REPENTANCE

PETER

'Tis midnight! The cock croweth!
Who knoweth what he knoweth?
'Tis midnight for all the world;
The sun from heaven is hurled!
I think I am as one dead
There is such ache i' my head.
Where am I? What have done?
To myself am lost — undone;
A liar leaning on pride.
'Tis broken. I but divide
With Judas — traitors both!
Sealing treason with an oath.
Hands off! The cursed cock
Scoffs at me — the Rock!

He told me this, 'Your pride
Is near to cowardice allied.'
The tears that I would shed
Are coals that burn my head.
My brain's afire! Ah, God!
My tears would soak this sod.
Wilt thou not let me weep?
What use? I've sowed! I reap!
Would weeping cleanse my stain,
Trodden love make whole again?

JUDAS' LAMENT

TO THE PRIESTS

Thieves! liars! murderers! I am as thou art,
Henceforth damned for this, my traitor's part.
Take back this cursed silver! See! 'tis red!
'Tis blood! 'tis fire! It burns my hand! my
head!

The flames rise, taking my wits for nutriment!
I've done a deed, God knows, I had not meant.
Dost hear? The blood thou'st shed was innocent,
Ne'er to treason nor to blasphemy was lent.

It burns, I say! Take back the curst stuff!

Save,

Ere I fall headlong in unhallowed grave.
See, Yahwe, these thy priests — holy ones
all! —

Set to save the world from doom of Adam's
Fall!

Poor world! poor souls! poor I! As wolves
they save —

I' bottom of their bellies — rotten grave!

O Christ! O Love! forever lost to me!

That I should do this foul thing unto thee!

All the world, knowing thee, shall curse my evil.

Thou Jesus! I Judas! Thou God! I devil!

So shall all time pinion me against thy grace;

Contrasting, paint me in the traitor's place.
I loved thee! that thou knowest; but the fight
Grew thick. There was no rest — nor day, nor
night.

'Twas Peter said we soon must meet the spear
Of Roman soldiers — draw the sword — 'twas
clear.

The people expected this; would take no thought
But deliv'rance would by miracle be wrought.
I knew thou wert no king, nor sought to be;
Being something better, why should'st a prince-
let be?

What then? A mob some day — short shrift;
quick strife —

Those iron men of Rome would have thy life.
A dozen simple fellows! a mob at bay!
A dozen swords would brush them all away!
They said they would but end the bitter strife;
Withdraw thee from the crowd, but spare thy
life.

O head! O soul!

Wilt take this silver, priests? Then will I fling
Upon this marble floor — and may the ring
Ne'er leave thine ears, bring vengeance on thy
crime

Till thou shalt taste of Hell's infernal clime.

PRIESTS

Take off the crazy fool. What's that to us?
If he have sold a man of righteousness,
The deed's his own; the blood's on him alone;
Not on us, or ours, rests it to make atone.
Begone with him. We've won; that's all our
plot.

Hang him on yon tree i' the temple's lot;
Then take the silver for great Yahwe's sake;
By deed of charity atonement make.
The Potter's field we'll buy, a thin cheap spot,
Where strangers be allowed to lie and rot.

(Aside)

The people will applaud, give us a name
For charity and spread our honest fame.
To take the silver back for temple use
Would danger our poor souls — a dread abuse!
Whatever else we do, we cling to the law;
Nor bruise the rim with e'en the lightest flaw.

ANGELS SING

Here lieth Love this Rock within
That it may master death and sin.
Now shall all people justice learn;
The sweeter strain of peace discern;
Till soul at last shall rise above
The grosser sense by power of love.

NOBLE JEWS

Well! well! and so the rabble ever rules; and we
Do let them put out the very sun by which we
see.

All's God or Devil with them — a man's their
chief puzzle;

Gods they hide from, devils they worship — but
men muzzle.

Here is this Jesus quite beyond their compre-
hension;

And they beyond his. They could not stand
tension

Of his prayer, parables, and Golden Rules; the
old

Sits easier on the conscience, being often over-
told.

OTHERS

The flavor's off the lily's lip;

The grapes do shrivel at the tip

Of yonder vine. On the priest's wall

The roses red grow pale and fall;

The primrose opens half its eye,

Then loses heart and 'gins to die.

They say the graves do gappen wide;

The tombs of rock crack down their side

To swallow life, let out the dead

Again the streets and mart to tread.

ANOTHER

The sun shineth, but it shineth not;
There is no gold i' any spot,
But pale half darkness on the steep.
Cold o'er the earth sad shadows creep.
There is a shroudlike hang to the sail
Of the silent boats where the winds do fail.
At noon the nighthawks fly and call,
And the lizards creep upon the wall.
Hath time forgotten hours till days
And nights are mixed in lost amaze?

ANOTHER

I know not! Only this I know —
That I know not; life's puzzles grow.
Would I might weep, but tears are dry;
Nor know I that I e'en may die.

OTHERS

Woe, woe are we! Death tramples us under
feet!
Love's beauteous flower casteth he i' the street!
Our Heaven ravages! plucks down unto Hell!
No pity hath! letteth us dance a spell,
Then gapes the floor, and there's the grave —
the end;
Nor gods nor men by prayer the matter can
mend.

ANGELS SING

He that would climb to the gods must know
 How himself to conquer, and all woe!
 His very temptations as crutches use,
 Nor ill as only ill refuse.

A PHILOSOPHER

Life is a book ; each day a leaf
 On which we write a joy, a grief!
 Fade! fade! ill tales of long ago!
 Fade! fade! sad page of wrong and woe!
 Sweet love write loving love until
 With love life's pages thou dost fill.
 Myself, myself doth mostly flee;
 Myself reborn each morn would see.
 My sins defy atoner's skill;
 They multiply beyond my will.

ANOTHER

Whose is the sin? Where lies the fount
 Whence all the miseries we count?
 Aye, whence comes dying and pale death,
 Struggling to loosen life's faint breath?
 Our first sad parent in his will
 Found willing back of willing still.
 Whence comes all grief, I say, unless
 From Him whose mission is to bless —
 Or so we fondly have believed
 While yet our trusting souls have grieved?

ANOTHER

Could I but nestle i' the earth —
Warm mother earth, from whence my birth —
I'd lie among the grasses soft,
Beneath kind trees ; hear music oft
From birds and bees and brooks ; feel kind
The touch forever of soft wind ;
Feed every sense with fragrance sweet,
Not caring that the hours be fleet.
Then would I life endure, and praise
The hours that dribble into days
Nought offering now but sore unrest
And teasing God to put some zest
Into our frets and worrying cares,
Or answer give to scampish prayers.
And by and by I'd nestle closer ;
Close my eyes beneath the clover
And sleep on — saying 'tis the end,
And nothing left to tinker or mend.
But here we come and find that life
Before our coming's long been spoiled.
Our very babe lips peep with prayer ;
Out of the cradle address the gods ;
Talk of the Heavens ; despise the earth.
Poor little fool ! Have faith — that's it ;
Knowledge is nothing. And human wit ! —
Why that is a very accursed thing.
I do not care for the Father hid
In infinite deeps unseen, unknown ;

Let me have more of mother earth,
And rest and peace in her bosom warm;
And when I die come up in the grass,
And have the crickets to chant my mass.

WORLD VOICES

Well content, we praise the earth,
Glorious home for human birth!
Lifting leaflet to our lips,
Touch we thus God's finger tips!

THE DISCIPLES

JOHN

Now are we left alone. I still do feel
The throb of his dear heart against my head.
"My John!" he whispered, and would gently
steal
His arm about my neck, and having said
His love, did seal with such a gentle kiss
As swept my soul with most unbroken bliss.

PETER

Aye, aye, John! We've heard enough
And more of this sweetness; times are rough
For kisses. There are blows ahead
That we must meet now he is dead —
Yea, out of them our kisses take
And call them sweet for his dear sake.

JOHN

Peter, your love was ever brave —
Mine selfish. I do pardon crave
That this my tongue did seem to slight
Your loyal soul; but this dark night
Demands that we his love recall
As buckler 'gainst what may befall.

PETER

Aye, 'tis our only bond; elsewise
Are we scattered beyond emprise.
Let us to Celsus' chamber, where
Safe from prying eyes we'll share
Our trouble and devise its cure,
Or else how best we may endure.

THOMAS

At best live on 'twixt shifting hope and doubt
Unto the world's midnight — our sun gone out.
Is he our Christ — or not? If so, full soon
Will pass our night of gloom — yea, this is
noon.

If Christ, what means this grief? if not,— the
pain

That draws us still to taste our woe again?

NATHANIEL

He is not dead; yet are we left
Like caravan of guide bereft,
Or like a ship that ploughs the sea

Without a helmsman. Moveth me
To turn to prayer. Perchance will ope
The heavens in pity, giving hope.

JOHN

Why should I bend the knee to him so well I love,
Or cry, "Dear Jesus, mercy have!" when any
dove

Is not so pitiful? Or why for love go call,
Or all my own reiterate in temple stall?
O brother beautiful! I could not live if thou
Couldst will to look not lovingly upon me now;
And I within that gracious love can do no ill —
Yea, ever joying most to do thine own good will.
Thy sweet warm breath is on my cheek at early
morn,

Or when I bend above the task of yellow noon.
Thine arm is round me as I walk the dewy hill
At even, whispering, "Dear my John, I love thee
still!"

I never asked of him his love, nor he of me.
'Twas thus we twain were one, since twain we
could not be.

I have no prayer but trust; there is no need of
speech

Where love doth kindle love and soul for soul
doth reach.

I cannot take of sound as some, and hew and hew
And shape familiar words until the old seem new.

ANGELS SING

Now the angels once again,
Drawing closer unto men,
Wrap the world in harmony,
To sad souls sing tenderly.

Upward looker, with an eye
Calmly resting in the sky,
You shall see — and shall not die —
God your Father passing by!

JESUS REAPPEARS

The first red touch of dawn fingers the ink of
night.
Across the lake trawl fishermen. The flashing
light
Of torches kindles flames on waves that lazily
leap,
And from the drowsy prow both ways dividing,
creep.
Upon the shore a fire illumes the glittering
sands
And makes the darkness denser where the Master
stands.
All night the nets were dragged, but nothing yet
they bring;
Weird the naked toilers as slow once more they
fling.

“Cast out! cast out to right!” a voice comes
off the shore!

“Let down the nets, good friends, in cheery faith
once more!”

The startled men obey, and whisper — as they
draw,

With many a hurried glance — the Master’s
name with awe.

They scarce can draw, the fishers, the overloaded
net.

But scarce is lift ere Peter round his shoulders
wet

Girds coat, and leaping in, swift swims he to the
land,

And there beside his Jesus he treads the morning
sand.

The golden-fingered dawn a robe of golden light
Threw round the twain; the earth held not a
fairer sight.

The Master’s hand touched soft the brave dis-
ciple’s head;

And “Dost thou love me, Simon?” in loving ac-
cents said.

“Yea, Jesus! Thou knowest that I love thee
true and well.”

“Then feed my lambs, and to the world my
words go tell.

But dost thou love me, Peter? ” “ Why ask me
thus again?

Thou knowest that my love surpasses that of
men.”

Then closer drew he to his heart that tawny head.
“ Than all things else thou lovest? ” still ques-
tioning said.

The fiery spirit flashed: “ Thou knowest, Mas-
ter, all.

I love thee so, my Jesus, that greater love or
small

No other love can be.” “ E’en so I ever thought;
But by my questions, Peter, thine inmost soul I
sought.

Now do I charge thee — if thou love, go feed
my sheep.

I leave to thee the flock; do thou the guerdon
keep.”

Upon the coals the fishes broil. Along the east-
ern sky

The fire of growing day with flame of crimson
flashes high.

ANGELS SING

’Tis done! ’tis done!

Our Christ has won!

On earth below

God’s peace shall grow.

WORLD VOICES

Now i' the heart of the world shines one true
 life;
 Star-like, calling all men to love from strife;
 And He shall live more and more, till the leaven
 Of his life and his love shall make this world a
 heaven.

FINALE

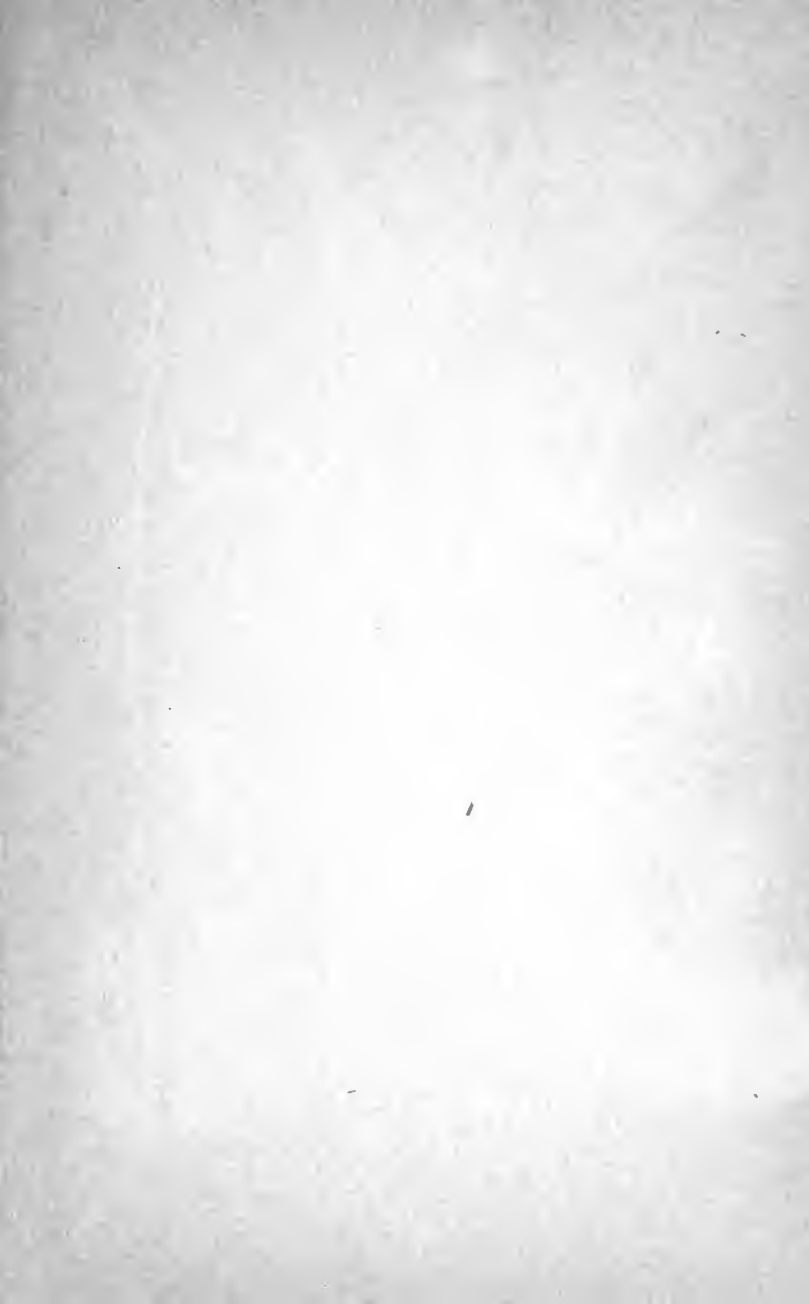
So Jesus became the king of the world,
 And he gave a new code of law;
 And the world did welcome this king of love,
 Forgetting those erst it saw.

For the Golden Rule is the rule that wins,
 And the nations shall heed its will;
 And the days dawn close that will melt the sword,
 And the might of right fulfil.

Straight down through the ages ever has run
 One line of prophecy true,
 That whatever of wrong might triumph to-day
 To-morrow shows champions few.

But rightness rises from every defeat;
 The Christs come down from the cross;
 The true that dies is a buried seed,
 And its harvest makes good the loss.





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